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THE NATION

JUNE 6, 1966 35 cents

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AFTER THE COLD WAR

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CLASS OF 1966

The Loss of Tragedy LEO HAMALIAN

BAY AREA RAPID TRANSIT

Advance Into Yesterday MICHAEL HARRIS

QUADRILLE

DAVID J. GORDON *on* D. H. LAWRENCE
DONALD FANGER *on* CHEKHOV
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LETTERS

markets for peace

South San Gabriel, Calif.

DEAR SIRS: Mr. Garretson's article "The Ruble-Dollar Road to Peace" [*The Nation,* May 16] deserves to be widely read by the makers of our foreign policy. It implies, paradoxical as it may seem, that our national security depends more on the daily caloric intake of the average Chinese peasant than on the ideological pronouncements of his Communist leaders. . . . The world has witnessed an ideological back-flip in the Soviet Union. It went from the "world-revolutionist" doctrine of the Stalinist days to the current "peaceful coexistence" line of today. This evolution can be attributed to two things: the advent of the nuclear age . . . and, more importantly, the rise in the Soviet standard of living. Affluence was accompanied by moderation. If this phenomenon can occur in the USSR, it can surely occur in China. I think that this hypothesis is known in Washington, but it is believed, I fear, by far too few of our legislators.

A policy permitting unrestricted trade with the USSR and China would benefit this country in many ways. It would help us correct our unfavorable balance of trade: it would stimulate demand and investment necessary, as Mr. Garretson pointed out, to maintain the 4 per cent level of expansion needed to avoid unemployment and promote growth; and finally, more important than all the domestic considerations that come into play, such a policy would serve to reduce the tensions of the cold war and to move us back from the brink of nuclear disaster. . . . *William B. Saunders*

doctors, drugs and druggists

Seattle, Wash.

DEAR SIRS: The prejudicial and opinionated reporting of Robert G. Sherrill in his April 1 article, "Razz-ma-Tazz in the Drug Industry" . . . must not be unchallenged. Mr. Sherrill's inference that the recent conference on the biological actions of DMSO, held in New York City under the sponsorship of the New York Academy of Sciences, was a scientific effort to excite public opinion against the Food and Drug Administration and a publicity attempt by the pharmaceutical industry to undermine the efficiency of the Food and Drug Administration, is completely and absolutely false.

The New York Academy of Sciences symposium was initially proposed by three members of the academy not connected with the pharmaceutical industry. This proposal was presented to the academy in June, 1965. No meeting of this magnitude could be formulated within a two-week period as alleged by Mr. Sherrill. . . .

No effort was made by physicians or pharmaceutical houses engaged in the clinical investigation of DMSO to obtain publicity in lay magazines. When the initial clinical reports of the medical therapeutic application and the efficacy of DMSO were properly published in scientific journals, it was not unnatural that these reports would excite public as well as medical interest.

Mr. Sherrill's statement that Merck Sharp and Dohme "forgot" to pass on information it had received regarding eye damage to laboratory animals until three days before FDA ordered discontinuance of human clinical investigation, is not true. Merck presented this information to the Food and Drug Administration in the spring of 1965. Merck did not then believe that the eye changes found in laboratory animals were of major significance in their applicability to humans, since the dosages of DMSO required to produce the eye phenomena were huge in comparison to the dosages used in humans. *(Continued on page 683)*

EDITORIALS

Who's Nervous?

Three months ago President Johnson was telling the country that "the strength of America can never be sapped by discussion," but this admirable sentiment, so buoyantly voiced, has been replaced by the animosity toward critics that has always been the natural Johnson attitude. At a Washington fund-raising party for Democrats, he pointed the finger at Senator Fulbright, a crass and boorish act beneath a pretense of raillery. Subsequently, at another party function in Chicago, Mr. Johnson referred to "Nervous Nellies and some who will become frustrated and bothered and break ranks under the strain." Some, he added, "will turn on their leaders and on their country and on our fighting men." Except for the language, this is the sort of abuse that is heaped on peace marchers by the hooligans who equate patriotism with fighting. In this view, anyone who criticizes the objectives or the conduct of the war in Vietnam is betraying our soldiers and airmen. Opposition to the war is, in effect, treason, and stems from lack of fortitude on the part of the objector.

Why the change from tolerance to such extravagant condemnation? And who is nervous, actually? The President may apply the label to his opponents, but the commentators, almost to a man, apply it to the President. He has good reason to be nervous; the headlines show it. The Vietnamese, whose freedom we are supposedly defending, are fighting among themselves and no one supposes that, by shedding Vietnamese blood at Danang, Ky has disposed of the opposition to the dictatorship of the generals. The full impact of these events has still not reached the United States, yet opposition to the war is at a new high. The draft issue has erupted on college campuses all over the country, and there will be more student sit-downs and rebellions. The casualty lists are growing longer.

The rise in consumer prices since January has been the sharpest for a period of that length since the Korean War inflation of 1951; and there is more inflation to come. The Great Society programs are shrinking. The President's prestige is shrinking too. The polls for the last eight weeks show a gain of 2.5 per cent among those who prefer Republicans over Democrats in the November elections. It is not a large figure, but November is still five months away. There is not a single sector, on either the combat or the domestic front, on which things are going well.

Walter Lippmann points out in *Newsweek* (May 23) that we have come to the end of the kind of war that the President hoped would bring victory, or a plausible simulacrum, without exacting unpopular sacrifices from the American people. That it would be that sort of war was always wishful thinking, but it quieted opposition for a while. The time for that is now past, and both the people and the President will have to face increasingly harsh realities.

It is hard to see how an astute politician like Mr. Johnson could have come out so recklessly against the opposition in his own party. By impugning the patriotism of the critics of his Vietnamese policy, Mr. Johnson thought

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perhaps to unify the party by force, but the issue is too deeply rooted for suppression by denunciation or threat. Mr. Johnson would have left more room for maneuver, both for himself and his intra-party opposition, if he had remained outwardly complaisant. The fact that he chose the course he did shows that anxiety has beclouded his judgment, in a way that, in the end, can benefit only Republicans of the Nixon and Goldwater stripe.

McNamara's Balloon

Secretary McNamara's speech before the American Society of Newspaper Editors on May 18 covered so much ground that many of the news media reported a part as if it were the whole. Some took a cynical view of the entire performance, describing it as a possible bid for the job of Secretary of State, or an attempt to change the McNamara image from that of a computerized brain to a human being with the normal complement of feelings. Gone, at least for the moment, was the Cabinet officer who speaks of "kill-rates" as if only statistics were involved; this new McNamara offered a design for world peace and the development of the underdeveloped lands. But what got the headlines was his prescription for a less inequitable Selective Service System. The unpopularity of the Vietnamese war is such that when a responsible public official talks about the draft, not much else will get into the headlines.

It was said at the White House that Mr. McNamara was not speaking for the President when he threw out the idea —by no means novel—of every young person serving his country for a year or two in the Peace Corps or in some other constructive work, as an alternative to military service. The White House would go no further than to say that the speech was deemed to be consistent with Administration policy. It seems possible that it was in the nature of a trial balloon, fabricated and launched by McNamara himself, but with provisional Administration approval. One purpose it could serve would be official recognition of the inequity of the present conscription system, thereby producing something close to unanimity between the Administration and the public.

In this respect the speech certainly did no harm and may have helped to prepare the ground for a less unjust system some time in the future, but as a trial balloon it was unsuccessful. It was offered as something to think about, rather than as a concrete proposal, and the next day McNamara himself pulled it down by saying that what he had in mind was "voluntary" service. This took it out of the realm of practicality. In such an intensely competitive milieu as ours, with most of the middle-class young construing education as a first step toward the affluent life, few will voluntarily dedicate a year or two to the welfare of humanity. Most of them, and their parents even more emphatically, will agree with the verdict of *Time* (May 27) that though the Selective Service System might need some modification, "it would make little sense to compel tomorrow's doctors, scientists and industrial captains to spend prime years in menial government service." That "menial" tells a good deal about *Time* and the part of the public that shares its ideals.

What the McNamara speech did do was to reinforce the

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public demand for an overhaul of the Selective Service System, following an investigation of how it operates and what can be done to make its inequities less atrocious. Sen. Gaylord Nelson (D., Wis.) drafted a resolution for a bipartisan study of the system, and the hard-boiled L. Mendel Rivers, Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, called a session of his group to hear Selective Service Director Lewis B. Hershey's views on current draft procedures. That is some progress. It is to be noted, also, as the single constructive contribution of the Vietnamese war, that it has impelled the re-examination so long postponed.

Mr. Goldberg Dissents

When Arthur Goldberg was drafted from the Supreme Court to serve as U.S. Ambassador at the United Nations, *The Nation* expressed the hope that the appointment might be the first step toward the end of the Vietnamese war. Instead, the war has continued to expand and to grow more revolting to an increasing number of Americans; at the same time it has steadily eroded affection and respect for America among the diplomats of other countries. As far as concrete accomplishments go, Mr. Goldberg might better have stayed in Washington—and perhaps he knows it. Some of his recent public remarks indicate that he is becoming restive in his role.

Speaking at Columbia University on May 18, Goldberg took issue with Dean Acheson over the part international law plays in the affairs of nations. He did not name Acheson, and the differences between the two seem, on the surface, to have little to do with Vietnam. On the surface, it was all very academic. Acheson had spoken on the subject at the University of Virginia on May 7; his was the hard-boiled view that "peace through law" was an illusory concept and that the direct use of force by the United States was a primary factor in keeping some sort of order in the world. This summation does not do justice to Acheson's urbanity and clarity of expression, but it is reasonably close to the stand he took.

Goldberg replied to the implied disparagement of the UN in Acheson's lecture. Conceding the UN's present limitations—which no one has described more candidly than Secretary-General U Thant—Goldberg went on to demonstrate its effectiveness in some areas. He described international law as the only alternative to the catastrophic outcome which everyone fears. Where the UN cannot act, Goldberg said, individual states must accept responsibility; he cited Vietnam as an example, but without enthusiasm. The speech was the first Adlai E. Stevenson memorial lecture; one could surmise that Stevenson's failure was on Goldberg's mind, and that he does not wish to follow in his predecessor's footsteps.

The dimensions of this discussion transcend Goldberg and Acheson. They involve the President and Secretary Rusk as well, and Goldberg was in effect challenging the views of his superiors as to his function at the UN. On the very day last February when Goldberg was authorized to take the Vietnamese war to the UN, the President ordered the resumption of the bombing of North Vietnam. Mr. Johnson in effect converted the UN move into a publicity cover for the resumption of bombing, and Goldberg has not forgotten. Nor are relations between Secretary Rusk and the Ambassador the acme of cordiality. Donald Grant, who covers the UN for the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch,* wrote recently that it is no secret among Goldberg's friends that the Ambassador "tends to believe Rusk's influence in Washington is destructive and has begun actively to consider retiring from his present post." It is a fair assumption that Grant did not make this up out of his own lucubrations.

Grant finds a parallel between Secretary McNamara's speech and Goldberg's lecture at Columbia. Both men, he feels, raised some questions about the underpinnings of American policy in places like Vietnam without directly challenging the Administration. Each, Grant says, is adept at tough fighting within the organization. Shooting at Acheson, Goldberg actually wants to bring down Rusk. The case is not proved and the President's reaction is unpredictable at this stage, but he may be running into trouble with his UN representative, and that would be no minor matter.

"Did You Hear That?"

Congressmen as well as Washington newsmen know that if they want a hand-out instead of information the best place in town to go is the Department of Defense's office of public affairs, run by Assistant Secretary of Defense Arthur Sylvester. In tones that were hardly meant to imply praise, Rep. F. Edward Hebert (D., La.) told Sylvester at a recent House Armed Services Committee hearing, "You run the best propaganda shop in town."

Four years ago at a Sigma Delta Chi gathering in New York, Sylvester brought his *modus operandi* into the open. "It is," he said, "the inherent right of the government to lie to save itself."

If it really came down to a matter of national survival, surely no one would argue with that. But Sylvester's notion of what constitutes an apocalyptic threat is both frivolous and all-encompassing. Often he seems to feel that to release *any* information from the Department of Defense would be to scuttle the works. Listening to him in action, one gets the impression that he thinks duplicity and the loose handling of facts are a nation's first bulwark of defense.

New insight into Sylvester's mind and methods was supplied by Morley Safer, C.B.S. News's valorous legman in Vietnam, writing in the Overseas Press Club's publication, "Dateline 1966 Covering War."

Safer tells of a meeting in Saigon between front-line newsmen and Sylvester, at which the Defense official informed the correspondents (in Safer's words) that they "had a patriotic duty to disseminate only information that made the United States look good." Somebody asked him if he actually meant the press should be the handmaiden of the government and Safer quotes him as saying: "That's exactly what I mean." He is also quoted on that occasion as saying, "Look, if you think any American official is going to tell you the truth, then you're stupid. Did you hear that?—stupid." And when newsmen, without whom this country would be told next to nothing about actual conditions in Vietnam, protested his attitude, says Safer, the great Sylvester threatened: "Look, I don't even have to talk to you people. I know how to deal with you through your editors and publishers in the States."

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When Rep. Durwood G. Hall (R., Mo.) published Safer's account in the *Congressional Record*, Sylvester said that was a dirty trick and requested that his letter of protest to the Overseas Press Club be also put into the *Record*, which it was. It is a revealing letter, for although Sylvester, as might be expected, claims it is "utterly untrue" that he had said the press should send only favorable dispatches, he does not in any significant way attempt to refute Safer's charges of high-handed badgering.

Considering that this is the man who sets the regulations by which newspaper reporters and television newsmen in Vietnam must operate, it comes to be almost a measure of professional heroism that the truth, more often than not, *does* get past him.

Mr. Charlie's Puzzle

The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee's unbudging determination to work out the black man's problem in the black man's way has provoked a strange response from the white side of the tracks. Suddenly there are uneasy stories about an ominous "black nationalism" in the South. And when Stokely Carmichael, SNCC's new chairman, turned down an invitation to the White House conference on civil rights, this action is suddenly judged to be a new "hard line."

Just what does the white man want? For a century he urged the Negro to stay in his place; but now when the Negro says, all right, that's just what I'll do, and I'll make it a better place to be—he is called a "black nationalist." The difference between a Negro's "staying in his place" and "black nationalism" is only a degree of temper: the former is servile, the latter is angry. That's the only difference, and the whites might as well admit it. When they complain about black nationalism, they're not complaining about anything new; but now they are tacitly admitting fear of it, and that *is* new.

As for SNCC's refusal to suffer more talk about civil rights action, it does not really seem so radical. The school integration decision has been the law of the land for twelve years and less than 5 per cent of the Negroes of the South are attending integrated schools; the Civil Rights Act has been on the books for two years, and Negroes are still beaten when they try to buy food in public restaurants; the Voting Rights Act has been on the books for a year, and federal registrars still have not been sent, for example, to Sen. James Eastland's home county, despite frequent pleas for their assistance. Totting up the need for action, SNCC's impatience with more talk may be tactically unwise, but it is surely understandable.

Hog-Pen Morality

The plague of Wallace politics did not, thank God, spread to Florida. Openly appealing to the whites of that state to follow the lead of their Alabama neighbors and "vote against the black bloc," Governor Haydon Burns went down to defeat. For the first time in that state's history, an unabashed liberal stands a good chance of being elected to the governorship. Miami Mayor Robert King High did not make it solely with the help of the Negro vote, of course; many thousands of white Floridians were sickened by Burns's gutter appeal to racism, just as they had been sickened by the connivings of his two years in office.

In many respects a Deep South state, Florida in this election seems to have reached a responsible maturity. The run-off was, at Burns's insistence, conducted strictly in racial terms. But Floridians did not respond this time as they always have responded in the past. Still wary of the Negro, they at least saw in the blacks less of a threat than another term under Burns, who for sixteen years was mayor of Jacksonville, one of the most corrupt and crime-ridden cities in America, and whose two years in the governorship were marked by what High called "hog-pen morality."

TV AND YOUTH

A New Style for Politics

HAROLD MENDELSOHN
Mr. Mendelsohn, a social psychologist, teaches mass communications research at the University of Denver. His most recent book is Mass Entertainment *(College & University Press).*

For her display of bad manners Lydia Languish has been sent from the room by her aunt, Mrs. Malaprop.

Mrs. Malaprop: There's a little intricate hussy for you!
Sir Anthony Absolute: It is not to be wondered at Ma'am; all this is the natural consequence of teaching girls to read. In my way, hither, Mrs. Malaprop, I observed your niece's maid coming forth from a circulating library; she had a book in each hand—they were half-bound volumes with marble covers; from that moment, I guessed how full of duty I should see her mistress!
Mrs. Malaprop: Those are vile places indeed!
Sir Anthony: Madam, a circulating library in a town is as an evergreen tree of diabolical knowledge!

R. B. Sheridan, *The Rivals*
Act I, Scene II

Whether it be public libraries, "penny awfuls," short wave radio or television—the story has always been the same. Whenever a major change in mass communications takes place it is followed by profound changes in the make-up and functions of the society's social, cultural and political institutions. And significant alterations of this sort are always praised by those who welcome innovations, and greeted with forecasts of disaster by the others who are disturbed by the very notion of change.

Television is such a force and has produced the expected reactions. Its friends and foes have aligned themselves on

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the "it's good for us, it's bad for us" axis, engaging in an endless and fruitless battle of subjective value judgments, with neither side taking time off to examine what truly might be happening.

In the realm of politics, the "good-bad" dialogue centers on such "issues" as televised debates; the high cost of TV campaigning; the ability of television either to cover up or to expose undesirable candidates; and on the alleged power of television to seduce and sway voters against their wills. Although this debate often makes interesting copy, it has never come to real grips with the problem of television's relationship to contemporary politics as a process. The main reason for this failure is that both sides make the same false assumption—that the relationship between TV and politics is a direct causal one that always results in the individual voter being specifically influenced.

On the evidence of conditioned reflex psychology, information theory and cybernetics, it is often asserted that the televised political campaign is a peculiarly powerful stimulus system that automatically produces desired responses from voter-audiences. The argument takes on a simple-minded, primerlike logic: Voter likes TV; candidate uses TV to make himself liked; voter pulls lever for "likeable" TV candidate.

As the 1964 Presidential campaign moved on, the issue of how television projections of election returns might influence voters on the West Coast became pressing. A "bandwagon effect," it was feared, would be created among voters exposed to computer-derived projections before they had had the opportunity to vote. This argument serves the direct causal model perfectly: Voter likes TV; voter sees on TV that one of the two candidates is accumulating more "likes" (votes) than another; voter casts his ballot for the "likeable" winner.

Before charging hyperbole, the skeptic should read Max Lerner's thoughts on the matter as they appeared in the Fall, 1964 issue of *Show* magazine:

> The public interest doesn't have to carry the burden of proof . . . to show beyond doubt that the TV early projections are necessarily harmful. It need only show what might and could happen. We know enough about voter behavior to know that the voter is highly suggestible, the American is a lonely person; he feels less lonely when he is joining others, especially on the winning side. Even granting that some voters are counter-suggestible, the two don't cancel each other out: in both cases the voter's mind is inflammable timber. . . .

The spectacle of the addlepated voter being chivvied and herded by broadcast tomfoolery is rooted in the quaint lavender-and-lace "crowd psychology" theories of Gustave Le Bon and Ortega y Gasset. By contrast, sophisticated observers of the contemporary American scene have become increasingly aware of a considerable number of major research studies, emanating principally from Columbia University and the University of Michigan, that douse with scientific observation the "inflammable timber" image of the voter. In essence, these studies have shown that the majority of voters make up their minds about whom they will vote for very early in the campaign, or even before the campaign actually begins; that they persist in their early commitments, no matter what they hear or see during the campaign; that last-minute switches are the rarest of exceptions rather than the general rule.

The overall testimony of modern political science on the direct influence of the mass media upon voting is that during formal political campaigns such influence is negligible. Far from being "inflammable timber," the average voter seems to be stubbornly determined to vote for the party he has fallen into the habit of supporting. Rather than being pushed around by propaganda, he is most resistant to all short-range persuasive efforts to uproot his partisan commitments—and particularly resistant to those that emanate from the mass media during the concentrated assault of formal campaigns.

This situation applies to the "bandwagon" problem as well. I made a study, based on two separate interviews with the same 1,704 randomly selected California voters over the twenty-four-hour time period separating election eve from election night, 1964, to examine the possible effect of early broadcasts of election forecasts and returns. Briefly, only 12 per cent of the sample had seen substantive election telecasts before they voted, with nearly nine out of ten voters actually casting their ballots before they had had an opportunity to hear significant election forecasts or returns. Further, regardless of whether they had seen election telecasts or not, 97 per cent of all the voters whose pre-election day choices were known voted for the candidates they had intended to support. Only fourteen voters "switched" their votes overnight—and the Johnson and Goldwater votes canceled out in the switching. There was no evidence that exposure to televised election forecasts played any role in upsetting the previous political commitments of the voters studied. That is to say, no bandwagon effect. Again, the evidence indicates that television is surprisingly impotent in its *direct* impact on the voting decisions of the electorate.

There is nothing mysterious about this. After all, a formal campaign announces point-blank to the voter that he is going to be propagandized and ballyhooed and courted and "sold" and manipulated quite unmercifully in a competitive tussle for his vote. Under these circumstances it is no wonder that he approaches his TV set during campaign time with about the same naive willingness to be influenced that a *Consumer Reports* subscriber would reflect on meeting up with a friendly used-car salesman.

But a man's behavior need not be affected only through what happens directly to him as a physical entity. It can be influenced quite indirectly—through inducing changes in his environments, for example. The psychologist Kurt Lewin some years ago indicated the futility of attempting through direct persuasion to influence people to do something they considered undesirable. Rather than ask the prejudiced man to give up his discriminatory behavior through propaganda, argued Lewin, one can accomplish the same social end by affirming overt racial discrimination to be illegal. Just as the Civil Rights Act may be far more important in terms of long-range social and political consequences than in its "effect" on individuals' attitudes and behavior, so the "effect" of television on our overall political institutions and styles of life may be far more important than its rather questionable ability to influence individual voters' attitudes and choices directly. This is not to say that

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voters' political attitudes and choices are not at all affected by television. The question posed here relates to whether the most important impact of television on politics in the United States rests only in its influence on individual voting behavior.

Given the history of the effects of innovations in communication, it is impossible that television could have arrived on the political scene without producing important changes. What these might be like was foretold by observations that social scientists made of radio's impact on politics back in the thirties. Writing in 1933, University of Chicago sociologist William Fielding Ogburn cited some two dozen separate political "effects" of radio. Among these he noted: "Procedures of the nominating conventions are altered somewhat"; "Presidential 'barnstorming' and front porch campaigns are changed"; "nature of campaign costs are affected." Even in 1933 it was clear that, with the advent of truly mass means of communications, the political institutions which Americans had over the years learned to love and to believe in as the only realities were to go by the board with amazing speed.

The seemingly minor use of radio by Franklin D. Roosevelt to reach directly into the home of the ordinary citizen produced one of the most profound political changes of our time. This single stratagem permanently enhanced the power of the President as a strong *individual* initiator of political policy. At the same time, the new ability of the President to act on his own as a political organizer of the national electorate marked the beginning of the end of local and regional power wielders. Now, in the age of television, national politics are indeed national, with the locals thoroughly dependent—and not the other way around, as it was not more than forty years ago in the age of print.

It is conceivable that we must look to the effect of television's very presence (quite aside from its specifically political influence) in order to understand its true impact on politics. Such a functionalist approach gets us away from the sterility of the mechanistic stimulus-response model wherein simple voter exposure leads to simple voter effect.

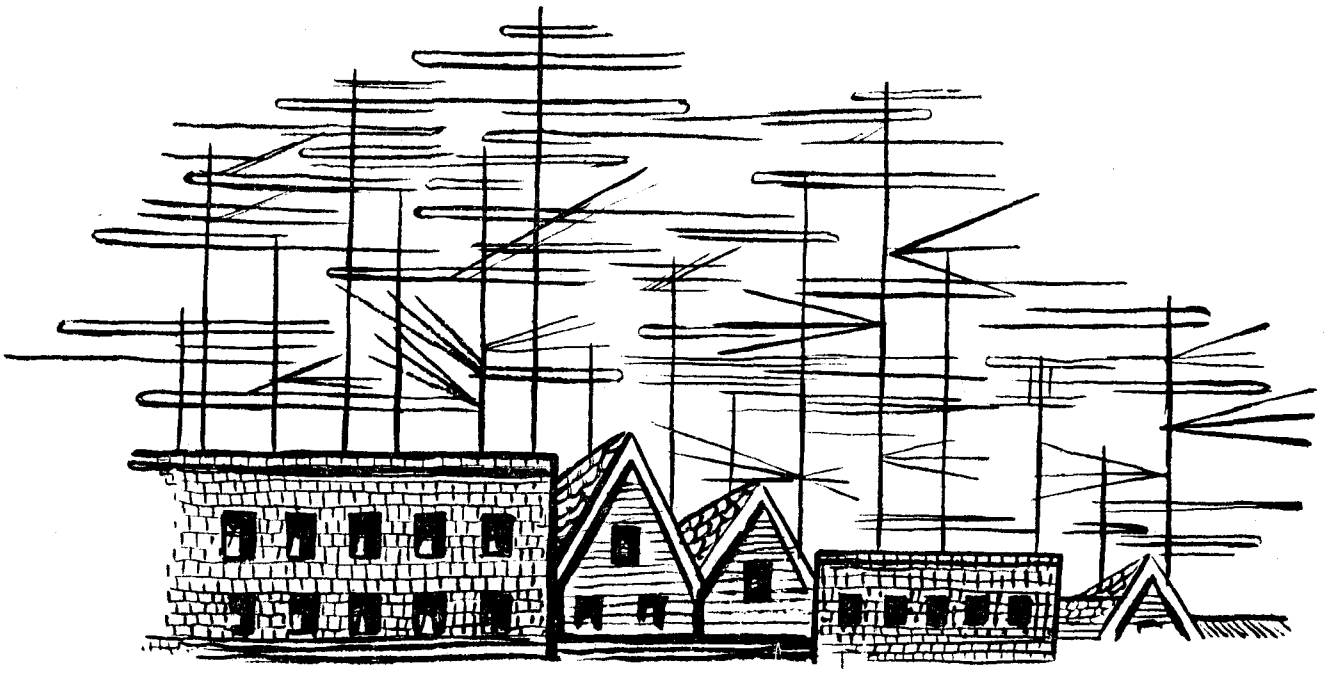
By the time the next national election rolls around, we shall have on the political scene a generation of new voters unlike any that has appeared there before. This generation will have been born into the TV era, and will have been brought up on television as the *major* medium of communication in their lives. Where the parents of these voters could test the efficacy as well as the reliability of the "new" medium against the centuries-hallowed institution of print, the present generation has grown up in a milieu where print (as well as radio and films) has increasingly played second fiddle to the overwhelming predominance of television.

Elmo Roper public-opinion surveys taken over the past several years have shown a general ascendancy of television over newspapers and other media as the predominant news source in America today. Figures from the Roper study conducted in 1964 show further that television's *credibility* vis-à-vis other media increases as age decreases. Thus, where 36 per cent of those sampled in the 50-and-over age bracket considered TV to be the most believable medium, 52 per cent of the 20-to-25 "new voter" age group thought television to be the most believable.

If television is increasingly acceptable to the electorate as a source of reliable political information and guidance, it will be used increasingly for those purposes. And expanded use of TV in the political arena will in turn result in a growing sensitivity to television's peculiar needs and demands. This will modify our ways of conducting political business but the lines along which the change will develop are as yet difficult to foretell in detail.

More than any other observer, Marshall McLuhan considers television as the most "involving" medium of communication. Proclaiming TV the "cool" medium, McLuhan believes that its power derives from its lack of structure (as compared to print), the unique consequence being that viewers must fill in for themselves what the medium has either omitted or played down. "If the medium is of low intensity," speculates McLuhan, "the participation is high."

It is not necessary to clothe this simple observation in



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McLuhan's metaphysical mystique in order to recognize television's capacity to attract, to involve and to absorb. No parent who has been hooked into watching an entire half-hour of *Yogi Bear* simply by making a casual inquiry into what his youngster was viewing will deny this. Because television does have this ability to "involve" the viewer, it not only shares with print the ability to transmit "messages" but has also an incredible ability to convey the sense of actual participation in the events displayed.

Where print confronts the reader with the results of such varied and complex political processes as caucusing, negotiating, compromising, confronting, exposing, deliberating, debating, accusing, denying, manipulating and cajoling, television can propel the viewer right into these emotion-laden political *processes* as they are taking place. We not only read that Mr. Johnson was sworn in as President of the United States immediately after it was known that Mr. Kennedy was dead; we actually *saw* the dramatic scene played out in all its horrible tragedy, complete with an agonized "new" President and the victim's bloodstained, numbed widow witness. Some time later, we not only read that the Goldwater forces steam-rollered the 1964 Republican National Convention; we *saw* the ugly and brutal manner in which this was accomplished, with Nelson Rockefeller as its chief victim. Given the juxtaposition of these two disparate events as witnessed *in process* by millions of American television viewers well before the 1964 Presidential election campaign was launched, does not that campaign itself take on the dreary aspect of an anticlimax? Was not Lyndon Johnson's fate foretold and sealed that day in Dallas, as was Barry Goldwater's that evening in San Francisco? What possible effect could all the "messages" that were subsequently generated during the 1964 campaign have on voters who had been *pseudo participants* in the fantastic events that brought Johnson and Goldwater into ultimate official contention?

Yet professional politician and journalist, researcher and PTA lecturer alike continue to pretend that the formal campaign—particularly as it was waged on television—affected the outcome of the 1964 election in some inordinate fashion.

In his daily encounter with political events, and with the unfolding political process, as presented on television, the voter begins to "see" politics and politicians in his own subjective way. The power of television thus to shape the long-range expectations of the electorate both cognitively and emotionally has for the most part been overlooked by the professionals in politics. This largely explains why television's full powers have not yet been exerted in the political sphere. When it is realized that political personalities cannot be "merchandised" on a short-term basis, we shall move out of this transitional phase, and then we shall truly enter into the Era of Politics by Television.

When this happens, some of the changes in American politics will be startling. First, we should expect to see a new breed of professional politicians. They will not necessarily be a bunch of well-poised, good-looking, vacuous actor types, as some observers have conjectured; nor will it be impossible for an ugly man to become President, as some have warned. The recent emergence of Hollywood actors on the political scene reflects a rather crude temporary response to the demands of television in contemporary politics. Rather, we can expect the new generation of politicians to respond to the "low intensity" demands of the TV medium in order to procure the greatest possible degree of viewer involvement well before the national conventions are convened officially. Regardless, then, of whether they fit the Cary Grant or the Anthony Quinn pattern, the professionals of tomorrow must project a "cool" image.

This image will be cultivated and polished over considerable periods of time—during which every opportunity for television exposure will be exploited. Testing grounds for developing this particular sort of imagery will be young audiences who, we have seen, are peculiarly sensitive to the televised mode of political communication. Sen. Robert Kennedy's current political strategy serves to blueprint political build-ups of the future.

The entire business of formal campaigning will be altered. Not only does the high cost of television campaigning require shorter campaigns and conventions; viewer surfeit itself dictates a curbing of formal national politics. Since most viewers make up their minds very early in the campaigns, the tradition of heavy propaganda saturation of the air waves toward the end of the election serves more to irritate and alienate the public than to persuade it. Consequently, we may expect these saturation efforts to

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be shifted to the earlier days of the campaign. Undoubtedly, campaigns of the future will adopt the same short, intensive focus that has been traditional in Great Britain. On an ever increasing scale, political campaigns in America will assume mostly a ritualistic aspect until the full step into the Era of Politics by Television is ultimately taken.

But most important of all, perhaps, the de-emphasis on formal campaigning will be accompanied by the strongest efforts imaginable to control voters' political perspectives *between* campaigns. The political management of the news, both by incumbents and challengers, will become ever more *the* important political issue of our time. The constant jockeying for voters' attention and ultimate favors on an everyday, year in, year out basis will inject into mass communications the fantastically complex problem of news availability, "objective" presentation of the news, news monopoly, editorializing, "equal time" and so on. Ultimately, in order to cope with these problems realistically, the Federal Communications Commission must be superseded by a completely revamped public agency, with explicit and meaningful powers of control.

The spread of educational and UHF television channels throughout the country will serve to revolutionize local and regional politics. As local politicians learn to use local television more effectively, and as local TV outlets begin to take the bite out of the costs of national network TV (the same thing happened with radio), the strangle holds that local courthouse gangs have had on our city halls and state houses will be ultimately broken. Perhaps we can look to a refreshingly new approach to municipal and state politics after all.

Whether these changes will create a political utopia or a political hell in the United States cannot be conjectured accurately at this time. If the past is truly prologue to the future, we can expect a good share of benefits along with a healthy dose of perplexing problems.

Meanwhile, back in the White House . . .

AFTER THE COLD WAR

CHARLES O. LERCHE, JR.

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Events in Vietnam, in Kashmir, in the United Nations and elsewhere are evidence of a development which, although welcome, at the same time deeply disturbs many Americans: for practical purposes, the Soviet-American cold war is almost over. That is to say, the Soviet-American struggle, considered as a system of action and as a historic force, has been brought to a full stop by technological and political obsolescence. "Parallelism" in the United Nations over Kashmir and the ill-disguised search for a common position in Vietnam have made the rhetorical flights of the 1950s and the grim forecasts of an inevitable Armageddon more than faintly out of date. Soviet-American relations are moving into a new phase.

Twenty years ago, as the United States accepted what it saw as the Soviet challenge and set to work devising a global strategy to meet it, the sheer size and complexity of the task made it unnecessary, digressive and potentially dangerous for Americans to speculate about what lay at the end of the cold-war road. Of course, "victory" was assumed to be inevitable (because the United States *always* wins), but the determining shape and the timing of the eventual triumph were relegated to the unforeseeable future. The process of fighting the cold war was rapidly transformed in the new normality to a way of life, and "after the cold war" became an American equivalent for *mañana.*

Now, however, the long-delayed moment has arrived: "After the cold war" is no longer a deferrable, utopian future; it is here, unavoidably, at hand. Strategies and tactics appropriate to the new American approach to the Soviet must be devised with as much "deliberate speed" as the nation can muster. If we fail to look ahead now we condemn ourselves to look back in regret later; the true tragedy of American foreign policy is missed opportunities.

Before setting out to sketch what some of the post-cold-war relations of the United States and the USSR are likely to be, we should establish one major point: there will always be a significant residuum of conflict between Moscow and Washington, no matter how deeply the cold war itself may be buried. Great powers with world-wide interests and lofty ambitions are never going to agree on everything. But it will be conflict "in the grand manner," marked less by ideological thunderbolts and war scares than by the bit-by-bit accumulation of small advantages that is historically the norm of international relations. Both sides have already accepted the crucial major premise: neither attempts any longer to force on the other the stark choice between surrender and total war. Once the idea is admitted that Soviet-American issues are comprehensible within the traditional categories of great-power relations, the entire tempo of the alternation of dispute and resolution will change.

For an indefinite period, of course, the world will continue to be trapped in the semantic system of the cold war. Both Moscow and Washington have made such major investments of prestige and power in the formulation of their respective images of the struggle that it will be no simple matter to shrug these off as outgrown (even though they may be). But eventually conceptual updating will be necessary; even the Department of State, so dedicated to its thesis that "nothing fundamental has [ever] changed," will be forced to admit at least to itself that evolution has penetrated Foggy Bottom.

The situation today can be put as follows: the United States and the Soviet Union must find a way to keep alive enough of the cold-war mystique to guarantee consensus

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at home and leadership abroad, while simultaneously gaining enough freedom of action to build a new basis for dealing with each other. Overt changes of position, in other words, will be slow and often painful. It would be unrealistic to expect either government to endanger its domestic solidarity, its bloc leadership or its world role by openly forswearing its long-elaborated "mission."

The next phase of Soviet-American relations, therefore, will in all probability be one of discovering and applying what we might call a new equilibrium. It will be "new" only in cold-war terms, however, because both must admit (at least to themselves) that their massive struggle was not after all cosmic or unprecedented in either its scope or its method. Moscow and Washington must come to terms with a stubborn historical fact: the assumption each made two decades ago that the traditional international order was a temporary and vanishing obstacle to the accomplishment of its own image of utopia has proved invalid. The state system has finally vanquished both its Marxist and its Wilsonian opponents.

This article, the second in *The Nation's* re-examination of world balances and American foreign policy, will be followed by a study of the problems and potentials of East-West trade, written by Harold J. Berman, author of *Justice in the USSR*.

The traditional order of interstate relations incorporated one basic concept: disagreements among major powers must not be carried to the point of endangering the system itself. During most of the past twenty years, Moscow and Washington often sounded as though the cold war were so important to them that they were willing to upset the entire order of states in order to win a victory. They can do so no longer.

The post-cold-war relationship of the Soviet Union and the United States will call for a "regularization" of contacts within the framework of an enlarged, unstable, but ultimately controlling international political system. This itself will mark a major break with the past.

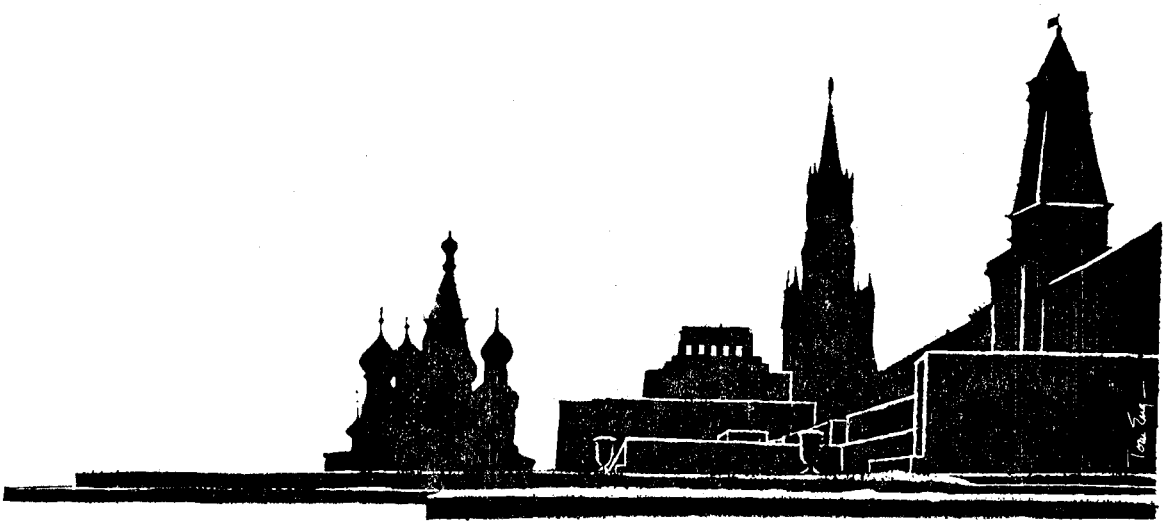
A special aspect of the new Soviet-American relationship will be (in fact, it already is) an explicit effort to institutionalize limits of safety on international disputes. Even at its peak, the intense cold war was marked by significant caution on both sides as each in turn came to appreciate the agonizingly narrow margin of error it enjoyed. Tempting as the tools—political and military—of modern warfare may be to play with, both Moscow and Washington show today their consuming interest in making these games increasingly difficult and expensive for everyone, including themselves, to play.

A natural first instance is the arms race. Already roughly stabilized by the balance of deterrence and the grim calculus of overkill, the arms race is no longer a dominant element in Soviet-American relations. It is obvious that agreement—probably still only tacit—has been reached that neither will accept the risks of either seeking a weapons breakthrough or capitalizing on a temporary superiority to launch a pre-emptive strike. The dominant concern of the next phase will be less the regulation of the competition between the two leaders than the prevention of further nuclear proliferation.

If the arms race is to be contained on a multilateral basis, the United States and Russia must adopt a common approach to the problem. The phenomenon, though familiar to classical diplomacy, is still a shocking novelty in cold-war relations. No other tack, however, will suffice to control either France or China—to say nothing of the dozen or more other states toying with the possibility of becoming nuclear powers themselves. Only a solid and explicit Soviet-American stand can keep the arms race from becoming world-wide.

But arms-control agreements are not found under cabbage leaves. They are born out of a political setting marked by assumptions of good will on either side. Thus, if control of nuclear proliferation is the major issue on which Moscow and Washington agree today, its accomplishment will require eventually the disposal by compromise of a number of other political differences still outstanding. In other words, if Washington and Moscow are to keep the world from exploding, they must first reduce the pressure of their own disagreements, and they can do that only by resolving some problems of exceedingly long standing.

Here the agenda grows suddenly long and complicated: What problems of the past two decades have not acquired



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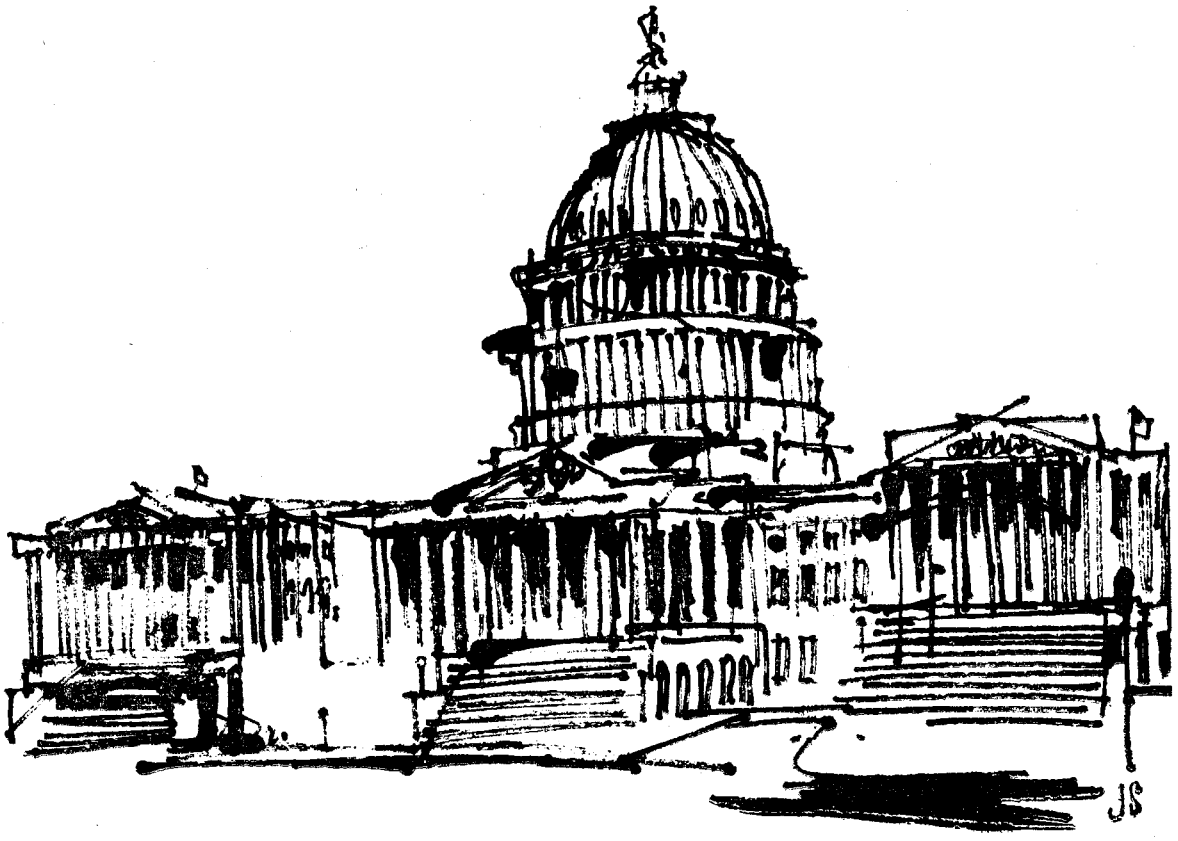

a cold-war dimension? Still, two are pre-eminent today, as for years past: the status of Germany (already deeply involved in Soviet-American discussions of a non-proliferation treaty) and the multiple problem of development assistance to the emerging nations. Let a beginning be made on either of these issues, and let each party accept with sufficient good grace the inevitable retreat from its own extreme position, and the climate of great-power relations will warm with impressive speed.

One caution needs to be entered here. A tempting approach to setting limits of safety around Soviet-American dispute, at least in the abstract, is to declare certain areas of the globe informally out of bounds. When bipolarity was a reality, and when such a self-denying ordinance effectively barred anyone else from invading a tacitly neutralized area, this was a viable technique. Today, however, both leaders have lost much of their once complete control over their respective group of associates. A Soviet-American disavowal of interest in an area—central Africa, for example—would probably serve only as an invitation to China or France to step into the power vacuum thus created. There is little profit for either in abandoning its effort in a region in order to turn it over to an ambitious third power.

This last point approaches the heart of the post-cold-war dynamics of Soviet-American relations. This decline of bipolarity (defined as the organization of the entire world around two poles of power and the control of all political relations by the interplay of these two centers) has resulted in the relative and absolute diminution of the span of control enjoyed by both states. More and more of world politics has slipped out of the cold-war system and thus out of real grasp of the two antagonists.

Both find this a dismaying prospect. The United States and the Soviet Union are both recently come to great-power status, and it is obvious that both enjoy the role. Now as fewer and fewer small states are left to hegemonize and as allies prove ever more recalcitrant, the rhetoric of great power begins to sound increasingly hollow. Of what use are the responsibilities of leadership and the burden of keeping the peace if so little psychic or material profit ensues?

Thus the logic turns full circle. If Moscow and Washington can no longer dominate world affairs by their conflict, and if both retain their urge to play the part of great powers to the hilt, only one course of action remains open: to try joint action instead of unilateral competition.

Of course, there is no real prospect of reviving a 1945-type Soviet-American hegemony; too much water has flowed over too many dams for the world to go back that far. But there is a vast middle ground between 1945 and 1966 in which the relative and absolute leadership and control of a Soviet-American consortium might be augmented.

A useful starting place would be a common policy toward the developing states of Asia and Africa (and perhaps ultimately Latin America). For at least fifteen years, new, small and often unstable states have been playing Moscow and Washington off against each other in the name of nonalignment and anti-colonialism. In the process, the Soviet Union and the United States have frequently found themselves trapped in a graceless and undignified competition for the favors of individual leaders and governments. Even worse, the struggle has often been profitless for either side, as the beneficiary states have been alert not to drift into either camp.

A new start in relations with the emerging world in which the Soviet Union and the United States decided

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together on the optimum pace and extent of development and on its insulation from political controversy would not only refurbish their damaged prestige but might also make a significant contribution to stability and peace in the non-Western parts of the world.

A second line of approach to the restoration of great-power status would involve a fresh attack on unresolved political issues. In many ways the crucial dimension is one of time; local forces are building up in such trouble spots as Germany, Korea, the Middle East and even Southeast Asia. If Moscow and Washington are to bring about great-power settlements in these areas, they must do so before indigenous factors break loose and confront the two camps with a *fait accompli* that could be reversed only by massive and costly effort.

A third route to a new great-power role leads to the doorstep of the two upward-mobile and dynamic rivals of the established leaders—de Gaulle's France and Communist China. Both are "revisionist" in the classical sense that each seeks a rearrangement of power and status in its own favor; both are therefore intrinsically hostile to Soviet-American claims to pre-eminence. Both, furthermore, owe much of their contemporary significance to their exploitation of the shadow zone left by the cold war between Moscow and Washington.

Again, neither the Soviet Union nor the United States can view placidly the continued resurgence of France and China, but neither can deal effectively with them alone. A common (or even a "parallel") front in major issues such as nuclear proliferation would have gratifying results in restoring a more normal configuration to the pattern of world politics. Not, of course, that either Paris or Peking would subside completely into the role of complaisant ally from which both have escaped; however, a forceful reminder from the great powers in concord of the realities of status and role in the real world would go far to restore stability in world relations.

Thus the probabilities are that the post-cold-war phase of Soviet-American relations will involve a slow but steady reversion to some approximation of classical patterns of great-power interaction. But history has its own compelling logic and the swing back to earlier principles can never be complete. Many important issues will continue to divide Moscow and Washington, and the new world of technological change will never permit the complete sway of old-fashioned great-power tactics. But the basic proposition remains: The strategic pattern of the cold-war era was founded on revolutionary concepts, but the next phase of Soviet-American relations will proceed from much more traditional assumptions about the nature and purposes of international politics.

CLASS OF 1966

THE LOSS OF TRAGEDY

LEO HAMALIAN

Mr. Hamalian, who teaches in the English faculty of the City College of New York, is now working on a critical biography of D. H. Lawrence in Italy.

For generations, in the words of the late David Boroff, "City College [of New York] has conjured up an image of free tuition, humble origins, and intellectual excellence—of a kind of proletarian Harvard." On occasion, from behind this iron image there issued rumors about a student body endowed with terrifying energy, ambition and talent: City College students, it was reported incredulously, not only survived the rigors of daily commuting to the edge of Harlem, not only supported themselves (and often their families) by working part time, not only coped with the demands of a curriculum devised during the Dark Ages, but also passed on to Ph.D.s in numbers unsurpassed by any other institution in the world and won more coveted Woodrow Wilson Fellowships than students elsewhere except at Harvard, Princeton, Columbia and Yale. In addition, they found time to fight for radical causes, which they equated with progress and humanity. Their radicalism possessed a puritanical quality unique to the "Holy City of the Left," and anyone who met a City College graduate knew himself to be in the presence of one committed to the improvement of self, city, country and mankind.

This image may have had validity up to ten years ago, but there is evidence that a new image is emerging. What is the City College student like today? I should like to try an assessment, drawing upon my experiences as a teacher of City College undergraduates in both required and elective courses, from my contacts with students as the Dean of Curricular Guidance in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and from my reading in the literature that has recently flourished about today's troubled undergraduates. The subject has, I think, intrinsic interest and throws light on the situation at other campuses.

Perhaps at the very outset I should pay my respects to the hoary platitude, "Students are students." It could be argued that today's undergraduate at City College differs from his predecessor of a decade ago only in minor matters: the income of his family has risen so that he can afford to dress more stylishly, own a car and in most cases expect his parents to support him while he is studying; he is even more interested in graduate school than his predecessors; the causes he espouses are more likely to be "liberal" rather than radical; and he sometimes has changed his name from Cohen to Kane. But even if we agree that the more students change, the more they remain the same, we can understand their problems better by recognizing the new factors and elements for what they are.

Students at City today seem to be no less intelligent or able than their predecessors of ten years ago. Though high school grades are generally lower, performance on entrance exam-

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inations and in the classroom suggests that, if anything, this generation may have greater potential. However, the college is accepting students with lower high school averages and transfer students from community colleges who could not have qualified ten years ago. Many of the entering students have no vocational goals or quickly abandon what goals they have (engineering and science drop-outs are growing in number as the hard work required in these disciplines more than counterbalances the initial glamour or the pressure from families who want their children in "prestige" professions). A large number are indifferent to what the degree has traditionally signified to City students: the opportunity to raise themselves economically and culturally. At the moment, their needs are met by their parents and they cannot foresee a time when they might face deprivation of the kind that nearly every City College student even ten years ago consciously or subconsciously feared. True, many City students still work, but usually it is to earn pocket money, gasoline money or rent for the apartment.

Thus, a large number of students seem to lack the motivation that was once built into the City College atmosphere. Without the sword of need hanging over them, many simply drift for five or six years, others drop courses the moment they run into difficulties, change career objectives fairly late in their college years, or simply become discouraged because their performance does not measure up to their potential. The lack of rigorous expectation and training in New York City's harried high schools may well contribute to this disillusionment, but often the absence of a challenging future as well as a challenging past is what blunts purpose.

The trend I have just described is more widespread than many administrators would perhaps guess, but because City students have quick minds and surprising patience, they manage to stay afloat and many of them catch fire when they come into contact with outstanding teachers who are presenting their specialties in the elective courses. Possibly because more students than ever before seem uncertain about the future—the imminence of being drafted plays a role here—this campus generation is correspondingly less dogmatic: they are not so sure that their own religion, their own nationality, their own race, their own political views are absolutely right. As a consequence, they are inclined to be sympathetic to underdogs and outsiders. It is no accident that the recent civil rights movement and the anti-war demonstrations arose from student sentiment. In an ordinary week at City College, there may be a "fast" in protest against the government's Vietnamese policy and a rally to support the strike at St. John's University. What makes these students different from their predecessors is that they have learned the primer of action, and often in collaboration with the "radical" members of the faculty who still communicate with students beyond the classroom, they have turned words into deeds. In fact, the "tyro" may be teaching the teacher in some areas of human thought and action.

In general, City students today seem more aware of the world (a number volunteer for the Peace Corps), more anxious about the condition it is in, older and more responsible outside the classroom, more immature and irresponsible inside the classroom than were their predecessors of the fifties (more late papers, more requests for exemption from examinations, more dropping out of courses, more cheating on term papers and quizzes, more leaves of absence for emotional reasons). They often seem to be saying, without knowing it, that they have the right to cheat because the world has cheated them.

The war in Vietnam has contributed subtly to this attitude, though its impact may not be discernible until the question of military service arises. Like most young men in other colleges, City students have no deep ideological commitment to the conflict in Asia and the majority will do almost anything to postpone or avoid the draft. Though far from indifferent to the sufferings of their contemporaries in uniform, they have no enthusiasm about putting their own lives on the line. Hence, the engineering students and the science specialists seek draft-exempt jobs in "essential" or government work, or they plan, like students in other fields, to prolong their education. The faculty has been inundated by applications to graduate schools, partly because of the City tradition, partly because they promise temporary haven from the possibility of an unpleasant experience. However, the recent "sit-ins" at the college revealed some surprising attitudes: the majority of the protestors are against student deferments of any kind on the ground that they discriminate against minorities. Thus, the draft protest looks like an extension of the civil rights movement.

Within the large body of the college, the small group that interests me most is the one characterized by the "alienation syndrome." These students are among the brightest on campus: they are often morbid, fanciful, articulate, apprehensive, withdrawn, well read in the "diction of estrangement" gleaned from the works of the "outside" writers. They interpret alienation, often born of a specific time or condition, in the most extreme or general terms. According to Kenneth Keniston, author of *The Uncommitted*, these youngsters are usually from viable but unhappy homes in which the mother is dominant and the father is physically or psychologically removed. The son has an unusual intimacy with his mother and thereby gains a felt psychological superiority over his chief childhood competitor, his father; but the victory turns out to be Pyrrhic, for it costs the son a father he can love and emulate.

In the eyes of the son, the father in one way or another sold out his early ideals: successful in his business or profession, the father has compromised and adjusted to a corrupting society. He knows what he has done, and thus guilty even in his own eyes, acts out his acknowledged failure in his relationships to his children. Hence, the theory continues, the student in this situation looks to his "peers" for the values he cannot find in his father. What complicates his condition is that often the members of the group to which he turns are in the same fix. They are forced to create their own values or to live without them. If they attempt the first, they frequently seek father-surrogates in their college teachers or religion-surrogates in their reading (Camus, Salinger, Albee); if they are content with the latter, they investigate the world of William Burroughs, pornography, the Village (East Side), the white Negro and drugs—environments in motion, where fluidity, not fixity, is the rule.

Confusion and chaos may seem to be usurping the place

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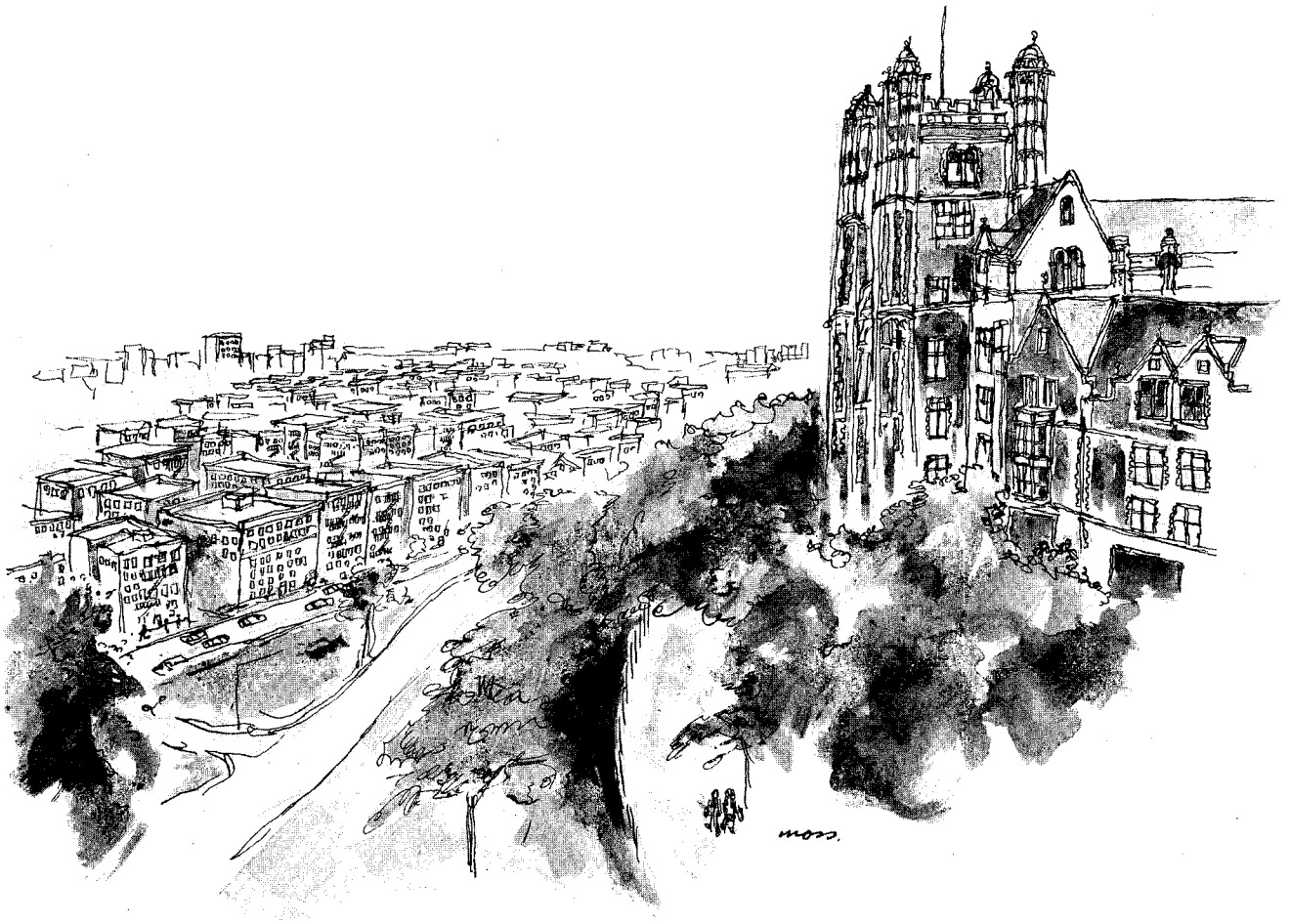

of structure in the normal continuum, but to young people who are opposed to structure (all organization is bad, the diseased development of a rotten system), chaos becomes the medium of existence. In a sense, chaos is a challenge to them—the "big risk." Instead of good causes, there is good chaos. The only organizations to join are those dedicated to the destruction of organization. These youngsters have developed their own sense of dedication, but how long they can survive outside all the institutions of society remains a question of potential tragedy.

Who are the father-surrogates for these anti-authoritarians? Often they are young (either in age or attitude) professors whose experience has been entirely confined to the academy (college, graduate work, back to college to teach) or professors who have had a thorough grounding in the affairs of the world and have recoiled from them. Until the young teachers are fed into the mills of administration or forced to publish or perish, they retain much of their undergraduate idealism and transmit this feeling to their students. Under this influence, the group already inclined toward alienation may become even more antagonistic to a culture that appears to have no room for special sensitivity unless it is put to work for Rheingold Beer commercials, General Motors design shops, or New York Life Insurance sales pitches. Far more than their predecessors of the radical years at City (and what an irony this is for the Great Society!), the alienated students are revolted by the nominal American experience of daily ugliness, of capitulation to the imperatives of business, of accepting so much that is felt to be evil for the little good that goes with it. One can only wonder what they make of a novel like Conrad's *Lord Jim*. It must seem to them like "pop" art.

Ten years ago, the majority of both students and faculty at City would have regarded these rebels as odd-balls, the exceptions who spiced the college community. Today they are, as someone said, "the invalids who have become our individualists." They are the loners who remain at home physically but who have left it spiritually. Most of them believe in "inner emigration," but now several talk about living in Mexico or Canada rather than staying where they feel confined in spirit.

These are not really rebels in the sense that their parading and preaching predecessors were rebels, and certainly they have not very much in common with revolutionaries. They do not believe any longer that rebellion or revolution can have a constructive end. They tread water without serious thought of how they will fill the years ahead. Many are not sure that they wish to live through them, or if they do hope to survive, how they should prepare. Hence, suicidal thoughts and fantasies are not uncommon. Tragically, they have no sense of tragedy: their heroes are anti-heroic and, like themselves, unready for an unworthy world (Camus' *The Stranger* is still going strong). They know only school and school is what they despise, because either it makes no sense to them or makes sense only if they accept the world reflected in the classroom. Their rejection of what they conceive as "materialism" merely serves to insulate them from economic and political involvements, from the

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conventions of adulthood and from responsibility. They have yet to discover a world that they can accept, unless it be the world of the imagination. On one hand, this world imbues its inhabitants with an aura of tenderness and beauty; on the other, it often encourages the perverse immaturity of Peter Pan. In the next five years, administrators at City College as well as elsewhere may face a much greater wave of drop-outs and expatriates to Europe than we have seen for decades—unless, of course, the fear of being drafted forces these students to continue in "the partial anaesthesia of suffering without feeling and partial observation of one's own automatism while the slow stain sinks deeper through the skin" (T. S. Eliot).

What is most interesting about this development to someone like myself who lived for two years in the Middle East is that the alienation is chosen and not imposed by circumstance. These young people could be "successful," one feels, if they had not become fed up with success even before they had reached it. This attitude may rationalize fears of failure, but I am inclined to believe otherwise. I think these students have concluded that success means selling out the values of youth, the age of poetry, compassion and idealism. If one cedes these to the enemy ("anyone over 30"), what is there to put in their place?

This sense of betrayal and alienation is subtly reinforced in the minds of the alienated by what they see as the spread of parallel stresses, estrangements and disenchantments through the entire fabric of American middle-class life. Many students at City College (and perhaps they are typical of groups at other colleges) are persuaded that America is an alienating society unless one is an engineer, a scientist or some other hero of our technological age. They know that as computer programers they can, within five years, earn more than their favorite teachers—and they do not necessarily rejoice in the prospect because many in the end choose to be teachers themselves.

They see little hope for a society that grows increasingly technological, because technology "fragments" work, which thus becomes labor. When men lose the meaning of their work, they lose also the sense of psychological wholeness and the possibility for spontaneous feeling and expressiveness. For this reason, Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (in which Marlow is saved from insanity by meaningful work) is enjoying a renaissance and John Barth, Joseph Heller, Norman Brown, Henry Miller and Edward Albee have become the mentors for these students chiefly because they celebrate a Dionysian inner life that can exist in spite of invaders from space.

Many of these young people place whatever hopes and visions they have not on the prospect of a better world or a great society but on private attainments of one sort or another (this may account for the recent rise in marriages among the good students at City College). College teaching has become extremely popular as a career goal. The campus provides at least a refuge if not a future, and the library permits one to investigate one's private interest in another and perhaps better age. It is a way of taking what little one wants from the world and using it as one wishes. Also, it is a society of youth and one can escape from the adults who are responsible for the desire to escape. Clinical psychology seems similarly to gain favor: it is an occupation in which the individual controls his own fate and extends assistance to another individual, often one who has been defeated "out there" in the other world.

If all this seems a maudlin recitation of the ills besetting what Paddy Chayevsky (now teaching at City) defined for me as a "petulant generation," one of that generation might well ask him, "What do you expect in a society where there is single-minded pursuit of a 'know-how' which is up for bids in a murderously competitive, materialistic market place; where young people know they must soon face the debasement of being used as means? How are we to accept a society that is indifferent or even scornful of our values, which frustrates the fulfillment of the 'whole person,' then calls him a lazy 'Beatnik'?"

Perhaps it is the same the world over; perhaps it always has been this way and inevitably will be. But there is no doubt that our students recognize the nature of their "reality" much earlier than did their predecessors, and there is reason to think that they are not emotionally prepared for the shock.

BAY AREA RAPID TRANSIT

Advance Into Yesterday

MICHAEL HARRIS
Mr. Harris is on the staff of the San Francisco Chronicle.

San Francisco

While Chicago, Philadelphia and Boston are preparing to tear down major portions of their antique elevated lines, plans are under way to run rapid transit trains at third-floor level down the middle of the main street of the charming university town of Berkeley, Calif. The mayor and the city council are fighting back, but their cause appears doomed. And without any significant protests, the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District also plans to operate elevateds in the middle of streets in two Negro neighborhoods in the adjacent city of Oakland.

The decision to turn to something as old-fashioned as the blight-producing elevated railway—or "aerial structure," as the transit management prefers to call its lines—is only one of the disturbing signs that something is woefully wrong with San Francisco's billion-dollar transit network. The 75-mile system, now under construction, has been praised by writers in dozens of publications as the long-sought answer to traffic congestion, freeway blight and the downtown parking problem. A persuasive and extremely helpful public relations department provides the writers with every-

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thing they need for their optimistic accounts. Unfavorable matters do not intrude. But the unfavorable matters are there. Even with a hoped for $45 million grant in additional state aid, the district is expected to run $100 to $150 million short of completing its present plans.

The possible financial disaster is of importance to many cities besides San Francisco. The Bay Area experiment is regarded by many as the rebirth of rapid transit throughout the United States. Washington plans to build a subway, and Atlanta, Pittsburgh and Baltimore are considering the possibility of putting in systems. The success or failure of San Francisco's transit network will have effects throughout the nation.

San Franciscans have known disappointments before. Candlestick Park, the Giants' baseball stadium that was built in one of the windiest parts of a cool and breezy city, was described before its opening as the first of the new stadiums; now it can be called the last of the old ones. Three pretty downtown plazas have been aridly "restored" after underground garages were built beneath their surfaces, and a fourth park is threatened. Worst of all, the dramatic San Francisco waterfront has been blighted by the two-level Embarcadero Freeway. This massive concrete roadway over a once airy city street separates the beloved Ferry Building from the foot of San Francisco's Market Street and runs over a space that was supposed to be transformed into a graceful bayside square.

But even after all these disappointments, San Franciscans had hopes. It was, after all, a city that had built lovely Golden Gate Park in the 19th century's closing years, monumental City Hall in the early 20th century and the War Memorial Opera House and Golden Gate Bridge only thirty years ago. The voters of San Francisco and two counties to the east approved a record transit bond issue of $792 million four years ago—an enormous investment for an area with a population of just over 2 million. Another $133 million was earmarked from automobile tolls from the Oakland Bay Bridge, and $71 million for the purchase of streamlined trains was to come from revenue bonds.

> An article by Carl Dreher on new technological developments in inter-city and suburban rail transportation will appear in an early issue.

I learned, during a six-month study that took me to all the important subway systems in North America, Western Europe, Russia and Japan, that San Francisco's boast that it will provide the finest transit in the world will not be realized. Almost no one shared the Bay Area Rapid Transit District's optimism that "modern" elevateds could be attractive. The system does not, of course, plan to put its trains on the sort of metal framework that once covered Third Avenue in New York. Instead, it intends to build reinforced concrete structures like those generally used for highway ramps. In the official material distributed to the voters of San Francisco and the counties before approval of the 1962 bond issue, the district promised that its 80-mile-an-hour trains would be "virtually silent"—a promise that will not be kept.

Almost from the start of my study, I wondered why so much world-wide praise had been lavished on a system that intended to bring back elevated lines. I learned the answer in Sweden, where Bror Hillbom, the planning manager of Stockholm's highly successful rapid transit system, told me he had spent eight days in San Francisco last summer. He said he had been taken to the test track in a countrified part of the system and had found the aerial structures over open fields to be "quite attractive." "How do you think the line is going to look running through the center of Berkeley on Shattuck Avenue?" I asked. "They didn't tell me they were going to run the aerial line on Shattuck Avenue!" he exclaimed.

Bertil Linner, the official in charge of engineering, planning and architecture for Stockholm's future lines, protested, "You can't build such a thing so it will fit in with the architecture of a town. It will be very nasty. You take space with an elevated line, you can't deny it. It will be noisy. I insist there will be noise."

When I returned home from my around-the-world trip, John A. Coil, chief development engineer of Parsons Brinckerhoff-Tudor-Bechtel, the transit district's engineering consultants, told me the proposed 80-mile-an-hour speeds would produce far more noise than could be tolerated in a settled neighborhood. "Noise is directly related to speed," said Coil, a former submarine engineer in charge of the local noise suppression problem. He had not been hired for the project at the time the campaign statement was written, and made no effort to defend the promise about almost noiseless trains.

"Where we will be increasing our speeds above the normal speeds of other systems, we should expect to get higher noise levels," Coil said. "Where we are at the same speed we are trying to be at least as quiet as any other system going."

Trying and succeeding are not the same thing. The district's publicity has declared that the key to silent operation will be the use of rubber pads between the rails and the concrete structures, a system that has failed to produce remarkable results elsewhere. It is used, for example, in parts of New York's deafening subway lines.

"We have concrete sections with rubber under the rails, but all tests teach us that ballast is best and quietest," Ernest-Gunter Borgis, traffic manager of the Berlin U-Bahn, told me. I heard similar comments in Norway, Japan, Italy, the United States and Sweden, but I was particularly interested in Borgis' remark because many Bay Area transit officials consider Berlin's subway the quietest in the world. Ballast is out of the question for mid-street elevated lines. A ballast of small stones, involving the use of traditional railway ties, would require building overhead structures with twice the bulk of those now planned. The "silence" may, alas, be deafening.

Nor will the appearance of the lines live up to the district's promises. I saw a twin to the Bay Area elevateds in Rotterdam—a concrete viaduct supported by a single row of concrete columns. "People don't like it," said Harry Edzes, the Rotterdam official assigned to show me the city's system. "They want a subway and have always wanted a subway. But a viaduct is cheaper and very quick to build. It isn't beautiful, and it is very bad for the people who live

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here. They had a very nice view of the harbor, and they miss their view now."

The Seattle World's Fair Monorail is a much more delicate structure than the concrete roadway planned for the Bay Area's wide-gauge railway, but the slim monorail overwhelms a good-sized city street. Property owners along the route are suing the city for more than $2 million for blighting their property.

Unlike subway systems in the East, the Bay Area network is planned as a combination city line and commuter railway. With suburban stations about 3 miles apart, its trains are expected to pick up city-bound passengers much as the Long Island Railroad, Chicago and North Western, and the Boston and Maine do in other cities. But instead of bringing passengers to a single San Francisco terminal, the Bay Area Rapid system is to have sections of conventional subway in the San Francisco and Oakland business districts and for a few blocks in Berkeley. Passengers may thus expect direct service to a stop in the San Francisco finanical district, a second in the downtown shopping area and five stops in less congested parts of the city.

Unfortunately, many passengers will discover that the trains won't take them where they want to go. For example, only one-third of the trains city-bound from Berkeley are to go to San Francisco; two-thirds will veer off to the industrial area of East Oakland and points beyond. This is being planned by the district with full knowledge that for every rider who wants to go from Berkeley to the East Oakland line, four want to go to San Francisco. Most San Francisco-bound passengers will have to transfer in downtown Oakland.

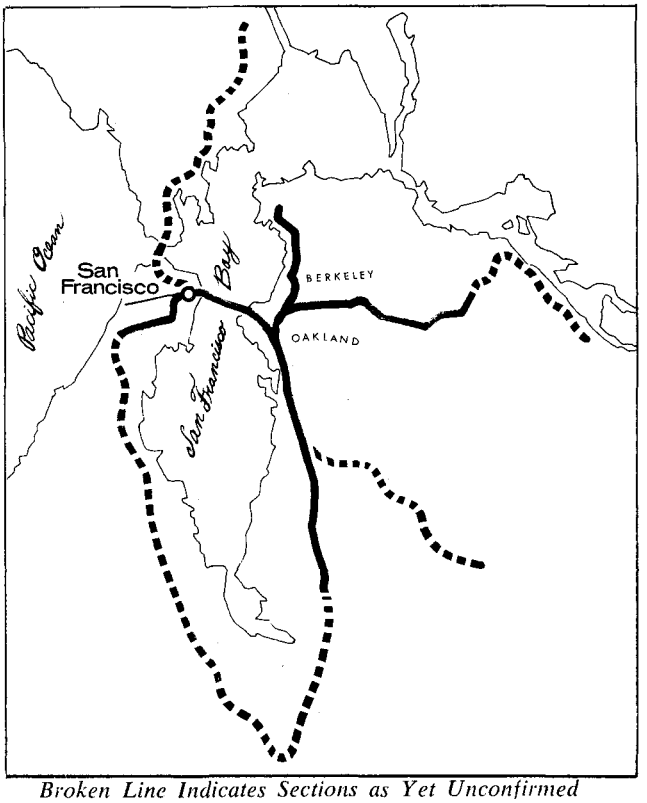
It would be nice to solve the problem by simply rewriting the timetable, but the problem lies deeper than that. The East Oakland line was laid out so badly that all its San Francisco-bound trains by-pass downtown Oakland. So that East Oakland riders can get service to the center of their own city, the majority of Berkeley's trains must go to the wrong destination.

In downtown San Francisco, the plans are even more bizarre. There are to be three passenger levels beneath Market Street, San Francisco's most important downtown street: a mezzanine beneath the street surface; below that, two tracks for Municipal Railway streetcar lines serving five large residential areas in the city and, at the bottom, two rapid transit tracks.

Many of the San Francisco-bound passengers will get off their trains within walking distance of their destinations. Others will want to transfer to buses or cable cars on the surface. But those who want to go to the areas served by the streetcars will find themselves faced with a problem that might be posed to an intelligent rat in a Yale University laboratory.

One might suppose that a passenger would get from a transit train to a streetcar by walking up a flight of stairs to the next platform, but that isn't the present plan at all. Passengers will be required to go up two flights to the mezzanine, go out through a Bay Area Rapid Transit District automatic gate, enter a Municipal Railway turnstile and then go downstairs again to the streetcar level.

It is a time-consuming process, and the problem could



Broken Line Indicates Sections as Yet Unconfirmed

be solved, as it is elsewhere, by putting all eastbound trains and streetcars on one level and all westbound on the other. Since free transfers between trains and streetcars are not contemplated, a little fence down the middle of each platform and some mid-platform turnstiles would be required.

"It's an obvious improvement, and we could do it," said Winfield O. Salter, project manager in San Francisco for Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Quade and Douglas, one of the three firms in the Parsons Brinckerhoff-Tudor-Bechtel joint venture. "But we've been given criteria by the district, and we're designing it that way."

The district's position, as stated by general manager B. R. Stokes, is that only 4 per cent of his line's riders will care to transfer to the streetcar lines that serve nearly half the city's population. Providing a convenient transfer isn't worth the trouble, in his view—though he said, during two hour-long television discussions we shared, that he may change his mind in the future.

One of the most attractive things about the Bay Area system is the plan to equip all trains with extremely comfortable cars—with air conditioning, luxurious fittings, excellent lighting and, so the promise goes, seats for all passengers, even during rush hours. The most distinctive feature planned for each train is a pair of control "pods" to be fastened to the front and rear cars.

The pod—a cabin large enough to accommodate the train's motorman and to hold some thousands of dollars' worth of equipment—would replace the motorman's cab built into nearly all other subway cars in the world. I was not exaggerating when I said it would be distinctive; no one else wants it. I found agreement from engineers throughout the world and from many technically qualified people in the transit district itself that the pod will bring trouble and needless expense year after year.

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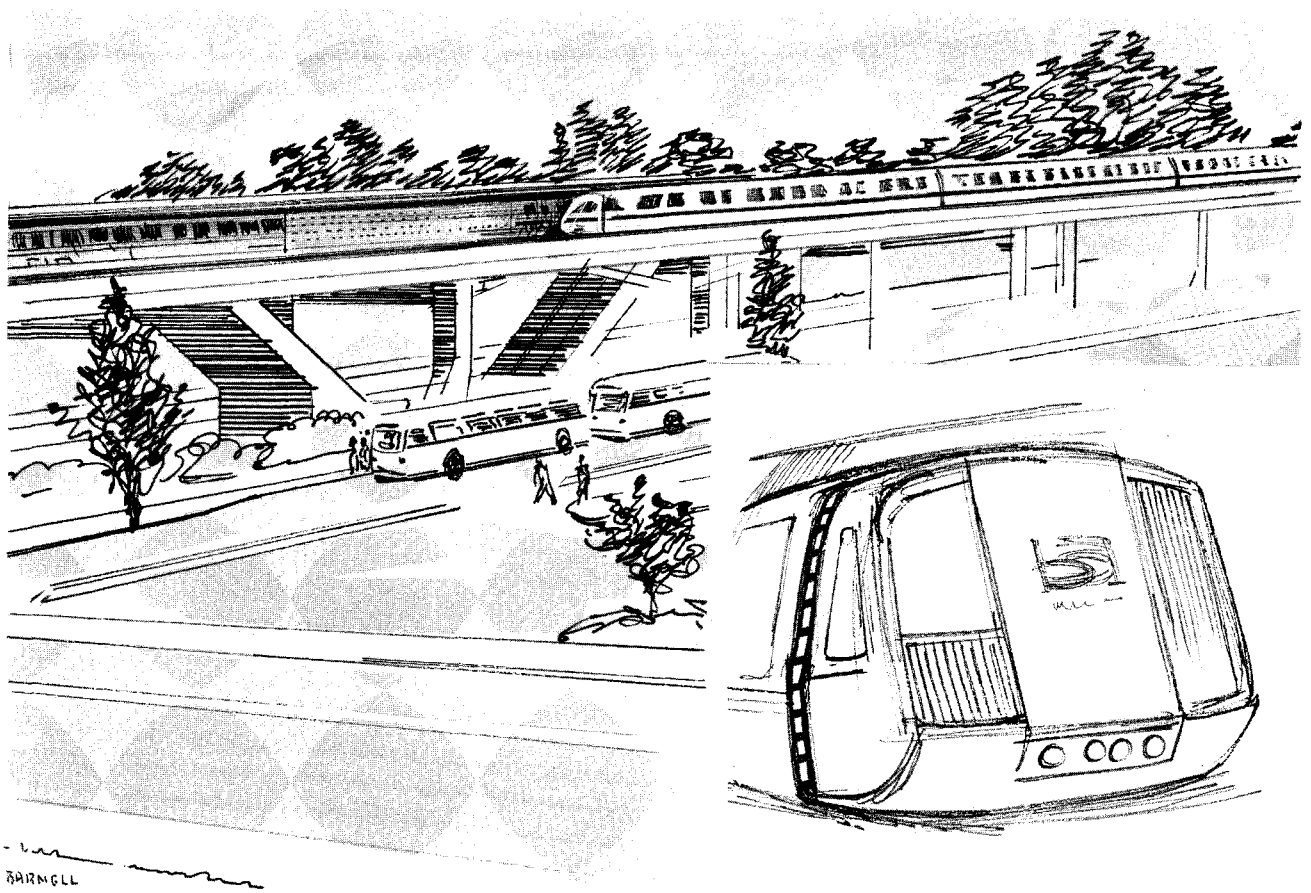
The chief difficulty is that the pod makes it difficult to change the length of a train—an operation that must be performed four times a day on a typical rapid transit system. In Stockholm, for example, some of the eight-car trains that operate in the morning rush hours go into the yard during the middle of the day. The remaining trains are broken into four-car units that are adequate to handle off-peak loads. This breaking up of trains in Stockholm involves nothing more than uncoupling the center cars. It can be done at the end of the line. Later in the day, the four-car units are joined again into eight-car trains. They are split once more at night and are brought together as full-length trains the following morning.

Trains with pods can't be cut in half by any such simple process, for the two parts would be bereft, one half lacking a nose and the other a tail. A pod is needed at each end because the rear of a train in one direction becomes its nose on the return trip. The cost in time and money to send all trains to the yard four times a day would be enormous.

Most transit authorities believe automatic controls are more efficient than manual ones and are essential for systems that plan—as San Francisco does—to operate high-speed, one-man trains. Four manufacturers are receiving payments totaling $2.5 million (two-thirds from the federal government and one-third from the transit district) to perfect train control systems on the Bay Area test track. There is no reason why at least some of the systems should not prove successful. Westinghouse Air Brake and General Railway Signals are being subsidized to develop systems much like those that have proved successful in limited use in London, Leningrad, Stockholm and Tokyo. Westinghouse Electric's system is like the automatic control operation used in the Paris Metro and ordered for Rotterdam and Hamburg. General Electric's is the most novel; it is a radar system much like that used to try to keep airplanes from crashing into mountain peaks, and it is being used on the company's test track in Erie, Pa.

An automatic control system is probably too expensive to be duplicated in each car of the system, but there is no need to construct a pod to house it. "We have made our controls portable," said N. O. Kallberg, electrical engineer who helps direct Stockholm's automatic train program. "A driver carries the box with him." I carried one of the Swedish boxes for some distance myself. It weighed 15 pounds, about the same as a portable typewriter, and was as easy to plug into the motorman's cabin as a radio.

San Francisco's residents were promised that their rapid transit system would be nothing less than "the world's finest." The reason this hope will not be realized is largely the result of incompetent leadership. The general manager, a former reporter for the Oakland *Tribune*, joined the district as its first public relations director. He has no engineering training. The first chief engineer, Kenneth M. Hoover, underwent a change of title to Director of Development and Operations after charges were made in a court case that he had never been licensed as an engineer.



Proposed Suburban Station on the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit System. Inset: Detail of Train, Showing (dotted line) Pod on Lead Car.

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Hoover's assignment to serve as "watchdog" over the bills submitted by Parsons Brinckerhoff-Tudor-Bechtel was made questionable by his background; he had served for eighteen months on the Parsons, Brinckerhoff payroll, working on a South Jersey-Philadelphia transit plan that cost the Delaware River Port Authority $300,000. The authority rejected the Parsons, Brinckerhoff plan and chose another firm's simpler and far less expensive proposal. Hoover retired last year, and his successor lasted nine months before being shifted to a less vital job. It was not until November that the district named David G. Hammond, a man of high engineering standing, to the post Hoover had filled. By then, too many decisions had been made.

The changes in cost estimates have been astonishing, and the management occasionally announces new figures without explanation. In the summer of 1964, for example, an engineer who had made successful bids on the Toronto subway and elsewhere was retained by the district to provide estimates on what it would cost to serve Berkeley with more subway and less elevated. This winter, offering no supporting evidence and the name of no engineer, the district said the estimates for Berkeley's stations had tripled in less than two years.

Last spring, the district told the state legislature it needed $133 million to build the central link in the rail network —a tube going from San Francisco to Oakland beneath San Francisco Bay. This money was to come from automobile tolls collected on the Bay Bridge. Now the district has said, after receiving an unfavorable bid for a major part of the work, that it will need an additional $45 million in toll receipts.

The transit district's officials choose to put a great deal of the blame for the ascending figures on inflation, but the district anticipated inflation when it presented its bond issue and it left a large cushion as insurance against rising costs. Inflation represents at most one-fourth of the unexpected expenses.

Where the transit district will get the missing $100 to $150 million (and my figures, which are conservative, have been confirmed by the district's management) is not known. The borrowing capacity of the three counties to be served by the system is limited by law to 15 per cent of their total assessed valuation. In plain talk, this means that even if the voters are willing to approve another bond issue, the legal limit that could be presented to them in a 1971 election is estimated at roughly $70 million.

The result may be that only a portion of the system will be completed. The district's management has denied this possibility, but the fact is that no architectural designs have been ordered for the San Francisco streetcar subway beyond the immediate downtown area. And no architectural work is being done on the outer portion of the line that serves the suburbs south of Oakland.

Disappointing as these deletions may be, there is also the real danger that even the central core of the system will not be completed before the money runs out. Rapid transit has been a fond dream for San Francisco, a city that sees itself threatened by freeways and the proliferation of automobiles and that wants to get commuter traffic off the streets and highways. By now, it is time for an awakening.

LETTERS *(continued from page 666)*

The physicians who have been engaged in the clinical investigation of the therapeutic applicability of DMSO for two years prior to the FDA order to cease and desist in November, 1965, have found not one case of human eye pathology comparable to that found in laboratory animals, in the more than 50,000 cases reported in the U.S. and abroad. Do we not know of the many anaphylactic deaths which have been reported following intramuscular administration of penicillin, the fatal blood diseases which may occur following administration of potent antibiotics, the toxic and anaphylactic reactions to aspirin, and the toxic side effects associated with the life-saving cardiac medications, digitalis and quinidine? . . .

It is highly unfair that Mr. Sherrill should castigate and accuse the pharmaceutical manufacturers of improprieties. . . . Dr. Morris Fishbein, a renowned spokesman in American medicine, recently stated, "In the midst of confused legislation and arbitrary regulations, the pharmaceutical industry is trying diligently, at great expense and in good faith, to meet government requirements in the assembly, recording and transmission of data. They feel that they have truly earned respect and confidence. Now they must face charges of incompetence and even of malfeasance. . . ."

J. Harold Brown, M.D.

Washington, D. C.

DEAR SIRS: My account in *The Nation* was based altogether on the written statements of Dr. Joseph Sadusk, until recently chief medical officer of the FDA, of Dr. James L. Goddard, the new commissioner, and on exchanges between these men and the House Subcommittee on Intergovernmental Relations. . . . Dr. Brown says that "no effort was made by physicians or pharmaceutical houses engaged in the clinical investigation of DMSO to obtain publicity in lay magazines," but on that point Dr. Goddard said: "Speculation and enthusiastic promotion both to the profession and to the public was substituted for scientific inquiry and deliberate evaluation of evidence"—and he means the substituting was done by the scientists involved.

Brown says it "is not true" that Merck Sharp and Dohme forgot to pass on information about eye damage to laboratory animals until three days before FDA ordered discontinuance of human clinical investigation. On page 5 of Dr. Sadusk's statement he says that not until Dr. Kelsey telephoned Merck on *Nov.* 8, 1965, to inquire about its previous report of dog eye trouble was she told about the much more serious troubles at the Huntingdon Laboratory in England "which had come to the attention of the firm [Merck] *in September*. . . ."

Brown says the dosages of DMSO required to produce the eye damage "were *huge* in comparison to the dosages used in humans." Let me quote from Dr. Sadusk's report on that point: ". . . the Huntingdon Laboratory reports had established eye changes in animals following application to the skin of amounts of DMSO *comparable* to those employed in man. . . ."

I do not understand why he thinks I am "unfair" to "castigate and accuse the pharmaceutical manufacturers of improprieties" when I do so only by quoting the then two highest medical officers in the FDA, one of whom, Dr. Sadusk, was noted for permitting the industry to regulate itself except in those instances—of which the DMSO episode must be counted one—when its wild license brought discredit to him. Personally, I am not very impressed by Brown's quoting Dr. Morris Fishbein as an authority on the integrity of the medical profession. Dr. Fishbein was for many years editor of the AMA *Journal*, a publication not especially famous for seeing the medical profession with an objective eye. . . .

Robert G. Sherrill

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

Chekhov and His Poetry

DONALD FANGER
Mr. Fanger is visiting professor of Slavic and Comparative Literature at Harvard, and author of Dostoevsky and Romantic Realism *(Harvard University Press).*

CHEKHOV AND HIS PROSE. *By Thomas Winner. Holt, Rinehart and Winston. 263 pp. $5.*

Chekhov is the last major man of letters in the Russian 19th century, and the only one who refused to accept the title or play the role it entailed. Already at 26 the author of over 300 stories, he was astonished to hear from the venerable minor writer, Grigorovich, that he had a gift worth cherishing. "Hitherto," he wrote in reply, "my attitude toward my literary work has been extremely frivolous, careless and casual. I don't recall a *single* story that cost me more than a day." The story that had moved Grigorovich to write him, "The Huntsman," he confessed was written in a bathhouse.

All this is familiar, characteristically modest, endearing. It suits the image of the serene, gentle man in the pince-nez, spokesman for crepuscular Russia, at once youthless and ageless; gentle mocker of doomed passions, who dealt with lives "clipped and wingless" ("The Lady with the Dog"), who might have called more than one of his stories "The Man in a Shell," who produced a new kind of theatre by skillfully removing all traces of conventional drama; who advised young writers to fold their stories in half and tear up the first half; who believed that "no plots are necessary," since "there are no plots in life"; who has an old doctor recall writing his first love letter on a sheet entitled "Historia Morbi"—and who, himself a doctor, constantly aware of the accidents that flesh and spirit are heir to, might well have signed his works "Historicus Morbi."

The critic and philosopher Shestov (whose essay on Chekhov, along with some others, has recently been reprinted by the University of Michigan Press), expressed a not uncommon view when he called Chekhov "the poet of hopelessness," and pictured him as lying in ambush, an eager assassin of everything men live by: "Stubbornly, sadly, monotonously, during all the years of his literary activity, nearly a quarter of a century long, Chekhov was doing one thing alone: by one means or another he was killing human hopes." This is a very Russian point of view. The men who put Siniavsky and Daniel on trial clearly share the belief that one can poison a readership the way one might poison a municipal water supply. The writer is an armed man; it therefore becomes important to discover whose side he is on. Shestov, whose thinking expresses this view in its most civilized and plausible sense, speaks of discovering Chekhov's "tendency"—that abstractable element which gives a whole body of work its unity, its cutting edge.

Chekhov attracts epithets. "Autumnal" seems inescapable; "sad," "gentle," "modest," "gray," "will-less," "weak," "characterless"—the words that purport to describe the man fuse with those that describe our image of his period, and both draw on our impression of his work. Chekhov attracts clichés—he, who skewered them so pitilessly!

His age, to be sure, is partly to blame. Chekhov himself said so—though not in complaint or self-justification: "For us writers," he says in a letter of 1892, "it is a flabby, sour, dull time; we ourselves are sour and dull, and can only beget rubber boys. . . . The cause of this is not our stupidity, lack of talent, or insolence . . . but a disease which for an artist is worse than syphilis or impotence. . . . Lift the skirt of our Muse, and you will find the spot level." The best of previous writers "have a goal, like the ghost of Hamlet's father, who does not come and trouble the imagination for nothing. . . . And we? We! We paint life as it is, and—that's all. If they whipped us, we couldn't go a step farther. We have neither immediate nor distant aims and our souls are a great void. We have no politics, we don't believe in revolution, we have no God, we are not afraid of ghosts, and I personally am not even afraid of death and blindness. One who desires nothing, hopes for nothing and fears nothing cannot be an artist."

If these words were the whole truth, we would not read him today. They are not, because in accepting his situation so completely, he transcended it. The great ideals that made previous decades happier times for art deserved respect; but he saw that they were now "words that nobody understands." Better to replace faith "not by making a racket but by seeking, seeking and more seeking, face to face with one's conscience." So Chekhov sought new answers to the writer's problem in a strategic retreat, not only from the "accursed questions" that had filled the great Russian novel and not only from the huge vehicles that were needed to carry such themes, but from all statements that his own considerable experience could not vouch for and his artistic genius render implicit in the recorded detail. Hence his rejection of stories based on the conventionally significant event, with a beginning and an end and enough expository comment to anchor them firmly in "tendency." Chekhov's readers had to learn to respond to a whole new set of clues.

They were unprepared for such novelty; and though almost the whole of the 20th-century short story has built on his revolution, and so made him look conservative, we can still sense some of the bafflement his contemporaries felt by going to the theatre. Even today, most productions of his plays—which are only transpositions of his short-story technique to the stage—accentuate the pauses and the tedium, the mirthless gaiety, the quiet desperation that afflict and reveal his characters, making audiences feel that they have spent not an evening in the theatre but a month in the Russian country.

The plays have been much written about; and so has the man, whose wonderful letters, so full of modest good sense and love of life offer occasional clues to the reading of the artistic work. (For an example of what he expected his readers to see by themselves, see the letter of December 30, 1888, to Suvorin, about *Ivanov*!) But the stories—which number well over 500—have received surprisingly little critical attention. Their sheer quantity may explain this. It is easier to talk about the "real" Chekhov if one has only half a dozen stories to keep in mind; then, like Shestov, one can take "A Dreary Story" as prototype, and find the necessary correspondences without trouble.

Thomas Winner's book breaks new ground by resolutely avoiding most of the traditional labels, and by insisting that Chekhov's art was both various and continually evolving. In thirteen short chapters, Professor Winner discusses several dozen of the stories, distinguishing, with what he himself recognizes as rough justice, three main peri-

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ods. The first is the period Balzac called *la littérature marchande,* the time of Chekhov's contributions to the humor magazines, carefree and prolific—though even here we are reminded that some adumbrations of the mature work did manage to find their way into print. The second period begins in 1888 with "The Steppe," "which introduces his impressionistic style and experiments with the actionless plot"; and the third, which runs from 1893 to 1904 and contains signs of "a new optimism," appears to be marked essentially by a deepening of artistry, a treatment of earlier themes but with "greater complexity."

This periodization, sketched first in terms of technical development, is then refined in terms of theme, with occasional reference to biography as well. The result is somewhat confusing. Basically, the argument for Chekhov's development through the second two periods appears to be as follows. At a certain point, Chekhov began to take his responsibility as an artist more seriously, and so was impelled to experiment, to see how far his own gifts and his own jealously guarded independence could be put to the service of social and philosophical investigation.

In 1889 he goes to the convict island of Sakhalin and single-handed conducts the first census of its wretched inhabitants. On his return to Russia, his work shows a deeper social criticism, as well as a new concern with intellectual problems in what Winner calls "the searching stories" ("A Dreary Story," "Gusev," "The Duel," "Ward No. 6," "The Black Monk"). Soon, however, more general themes subsume the pointedly social and philosophic ones: a chapter treats "Beauty and Banality," another deals with human isolation ("Life in a Shell"), and the last shifts the ground from theme to "A New Mood."

The combined effect of these shifts of critical emphasis—and Winner himself acknowledges that his groupings are mostly matters of emphasis—is to call into question the adequacy of "theme" as a consistent yardstick, and to raise the question whether Chekhov's purely technical progress is definable at all after the first period. It would seem equally possible to maintain that, with the exception of "the searching stories," his best work over a period of almost two decades recombines certain constant themes and techniques, and shows not so much clear evolution as tremendous inventiveness and variety.

But the frankly tentative sketch of Chekhov's progress is, in any case, a secondary concern of the book. Winner's main interest is in the kind of story Chekhov wrote, in the novelty and subtlety of his narrative art. He is at his best in discussing such devices as "the zero ending" and the special importance Chekhov attached to endings in general. In the later works, he notes, "which rely almost entirely on inner action, the conclusion becomes an organic part of the inner action, and it often contributes to the lyrical meaning and structure of the entire work."

Here as elsewhere, a weighty academic style works against precision as well as grace. (What does it mean, for instance, to "consider the work of literature itself as a configuration encompassing its themes, its motifs, and its composition, as well as its devices and techniques, and its overall form and style"?) Nevertheless, lyrical meaning and structure are worth insisting on—for the very modesty of many of the stories makes their excellence a matter of the significant reverberations they set up. Winner cites Chekhov's words: "When I write, I put all my faith in the reader, presuming that the subjective elements which are lacking in my tale will be supplied by him." His best works are marvels of disturbing suggestiveness; you need a sensitive ear for tone and an eye for juxtapositions of detail to extract all of the meaning that Chekhov has left implicit in apparently casual words and observations.

This is best seen in the very short stories like "The Student"—which Winner does not discuss—and "The Huntsman," which he discusses well, though not exhaustively. In 4 brief pages, with not a word wasted, Chekhov describes the accidental meeting, on a parched country road, of a peasant huntsman, drawn to the free life of the forests, and the wife he was tricked into marrying and later abandoned. There is tragedy implicit in the confrontation, as Winner claims; and the symbolic use of the setting does reinforce the implications of the brief dialogue, pauses and all. But it does not take us very far into the Chekhovian secret to observe that "the role of nature . . . is part of the total instrumentation of the story, in which nature scenes, much like musical motifs, are woven throughout the action and characterizations."

Where every detail and every ellipsis has a function, where the very punctuation is suggestive, something more precise is called for. "The Huntsman" is a masterpiece because it gives us, miraculously compressed, not only a psychological encounter, rendered with great delicacy; and not only a social situation as well—but, beyond both, a hint of tragic awareness of two ways of life ordained not by man but by nature itself. She is working in the fields, he in the forest. She appears, *by the side of the road,* "as if she had grown up out of the earth," rooted, stationary, female; he appears *on* the road, in motion, pauses against his will, and moves on out of her view, free and masculine; while she watches, "pale and motionless as a statue." ("Once the free spirit lights on a man," he tells her, "you can't root it out with anything.")

Chekhov is every bit the poet in prose that Winner makes him out to be, but an odd blurring of focus keeps Winner's demonstration from being as full as it might be. Sometimes, as with "The Huntsman," important details are passed over in summary, leaving characterization of the story too vague. (So, too, in the wonderful "Gooseberries," the poetic effect of the frame story, the motif of beauty expressed in the enigmatic figure of Pelageya, the themes of physical health and nature, are all unaccountably neglected.) At other times, details of dubious value are discussed at length (who will understand Chekhov better for being told that in the Russian for "smoke in thick clouds rose from the long thatched roofs," "front and back variants of the vowel *i* are emphasized, as well as *l* and palatalized *l'* "?)—apparently leaving no space to justify such astonishing assertions as that "Slime," the story of an attractive and aggressive Jewess in the provinces, is simply "a naturalistic description of a nymphomaniac"!

The same blur exists on other levels. Chekhov's relation to other writers is a case in point. With the sole exception of the connection with Tolstoy, which Winner treats illuminatingly if not exhaustively, his tendency is to mention the genuinely significant or problematic ties in passing (Turgenev, Bunin, Kafka, Camus), and to pause over parallels that are likelier to raise a reader's eyebrows than heighten his perceptions. So, for example, Chekhov joins hands with Apuleius (though there is no evidence that he knew his work) in "The Darling," and with Tolstoy in "Anna on the Neck." (The effort to see the latter as a parody of *Anna Karenina* is a model of misplaced ingenuity, almost redeemed by the delightful suggestion that the husband of Chekhov's Anna may be Karenin's son! Or Vronsky's?) The fact that Henry James treated themes similar to those of "The Black Monk" is registered in a long paragraph, only to prepare this scholarly approximation to a "zero ending":

> Though the intellectualism, heaviness, and extent of exposition which characterizes the style and method of James is different from that of the poetic talent and terse style of Chekhov, both writers tried to express, with an economy of action, and often by shifting views, a complex perspec-

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tive of the inner life of the individual.

It is puzzling to see how often Winner shies away from defining and pursuing the important problems in Chekhov, because he does touch on most of them, and because he clearly knows his Chekhov and Chekhov criticism well. But shy away he does. There is no conclusion, no final attempt to characterize the art which has been traced through a maze of particulars in the course of the book. Still, there is a good deal of useful information offered along the way, and there are some very good critical discussions of individual works—in particular of "The Duel," seen as an example of what happens when Chekhov undertakes a long narrative (it is his longest); of the beautiful "little trilogy"; of "Ionych," "The Princess," "The Grasshopper" and "The Betrothed."

The selection of stories, moreover, is excellent: this is a fair and broad representation of the essential Chekhov in all his diversity. So, for all its vagaries, *Chekhov and his Prose* is a stimulating book. The very provocation to argue, supplement and question sends the reader back to Chekhov with heightened awareness—and that, after all, is one of the things that any work of criticism should do.

Lawrence As Playwright

THE COMPLETE PLAYS OF D. H. LAWRENCE. *The Viking Press. 558 pp. $7.50.*

DAVID J. GORDON

Mr. Gordon teaches English at Hunter College. His book, D. H. Lawrence as a Literary Critic, *has just been published by Yale University Press.*

"The actual technique of the stage is foreign to me," Lawrence admitted to the playwright Max Mohr. It must have seemed so to him because his Romantic art was more concerned with states of being than with personalities or events and because his kind of verbal precision was achieved by means of an untheatrical redundancy. But the ten plays collected here are skillful enough—with the exception of the fragments *Altitude,* a mildly amusing self-parody degenerating into spiteful gossip, and *Noah's Flood,* an artificial exercise in theology fully absorbed by *David.* And at least two of them (*The Widowing of Mrs. Holroyd* and *David,* the only ones ever produced) can hold their own in the literature of modern drama.

Mrs. Holroyd (and also *A Collier's Friday Night, The Merry-Go-Round, The Daughter-in-Law* and *The Married Man*) belongs to the period of *Sons and Lovers.* It is the most studied of the five and, contrary to some of its author's pronouncements on the virtues of spontaneity, reads the better for it. The play is especially notable for its effective distribution of sympathy among the three principals—the miner, his wife and her lover—and for the natural dignity of its working-class speech.

The other four, according to Lawrence, "are candidly impromptus"—which hardly does justice to their genuine comic and satiric qualities. These qualities are least evident in *A Collier's Friday Night,* really a draft for parts of *Sons and Lovers* but valuable for its picture of Lawrence as a college student: doing his homework, grumbling about dull professors and the cost of books, excited by the reading and writing he was doing on his own.

But *The Merry-Go-Round,* in contrast, is a well-made situational comedy, which could probably be successfully produced. There are eccentric, stodgy elders who obstruct the course of true love, effective bits of stage business, neat curtain lines and multiple marriages in the finale. More distinctively Laurentian is the mother-haunted timidity of the men and the destined lovers' simultaneous resistance and attraction to one another.

The Daughter-in-Law and *The Married Man* are about men who are not inwardly free to love their wives and women who are seeking men strong enough to give their love to. In the first, a conflict between newlyweds is resolved by mutual concession, the man realizing that he has been fighting off his wife because of his attachment to his mother and asking her humbly to "ma'e what tha' can o' me," the wife renouncing her pride and promising to serve him. The second satirizes chiefly a married philanderer's fear of deep relationship but concludes with some Laurentian preachments (probably added in the 1926 revision) which would substitute a code of complete sincerity for the hypocrisies of prevailing sexual morality: unsatisfied married men should frankly tell their wives they want other women and frankly offer other women the sort of love they have to give; women should not starve their sexual needs but should preserve inviolate their ideal of man. This would be better than "subterfuge, bestiality, or starvation and sterility." Truly Lawrence is a 20th-century Rousseau.

Of those three remaining plays in this volume *The Fight for Barbara* is an uncomfortably close account of Lawrence's elopement with Frieda and their struggle with her husband and parents, too full of self-righteousness and disguised fears, while *David* and *Touch and Go* deserve more particular comment.

Both the language and theme of the Biblical play *David,* like *The Plumed Serpent* which it follows and *The Man Who Died* which it precedes, are in Lawrence's prophetic strain, but with enough modulation of mood, diction, scene and event to make it genuinely dramatic. It is a story of "the fall," for in Lawrence's view, at some point in history (in this case, the time of David), man lost the truly religious, impersonal vision of God as "faceless flame" and fell into anthropomorphism and social-consciousness; on the moral plane he dwindled from magnanimity to cunning and prudence. As the power gradually shifts from Saul to David, the play's sympathy gradually shifts from David to Saul. This is conveyed through Samuel and Jonathan, the tragic onlookers who, on the one hand, help David because he possesses the vital God-idea but, on the other, understand what values have been lost with the descent of Saul. The play is as close as the mature Lawrence ever came to writing tragedy, but even in the falling rhythms of Jonathan's final speech we are told that "the flame dies not," though men have lost the power to see it. Lawrence's God was virtually identical with the creative imagination and could not die, though He could shrivel almost to naught.

Touch and Go, a transitional work between *Women in Love* and *Aaron's Rod,* is described on the dust jacket as "a social drama of a colliery strike." The play might be more successful if it were truly a social drama rather than an attempt to demonstrate the meaninglessness of squabbling over money and the necessity for both masters and men to rise above this "petty" issue and fight about "vital beliefs." In the words of one of several characters who speaks for Lawrence in this play: "If the people for one minute pulled themselves up and conquered their mania for money and machine excitement, the whole thing would be solved." Again: "Put power into the hands of the best men, the men you *really* believe in. As for money, let's agree in decency to dispose of it so that all men could live their own lives."

Lawrence is simply too impatient with socio-economic conflict to be intelligent about it; Bernard Shaw, I believe, shared Lawrence's ultimate objective (and even his impatience with greed, his conviction that greed could be willed out of existence), but he was willing to ponder the

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actualities and ferret out the ironies of the system he wanted to get beyond. What comes through in *Touch and Go* is not the dignity of the higher issues but Lawrence's contempt for the poor who ignore them and his sympathy for the rich who, though they seem even more brutal, at least know that the whole system is no good and don't care about money. Lawrence fails to convince us that the hate between the mine owner and his woman is "creative" whereas the hate between master and men is simply "a sordid mess."

The complete absence of editorial apparatus in this volume is regrettable, especially the exclusion of Lawrence's short preface to *Touch and Go,* which certainly clarifies the intention of this strange play and has not been reprinted in any other collection.

The Career of Richard Sorge

THE CASE OF RICHARD SORGE. *By F. W. Deakin and G. R. Storry. Harper & Row. 373 pp. $6.*

KENNETH LAMOTT
Mr. Lamott's new novel, The Bastille Day Parade, *will be published in the fall.*

In her two books on the meaning of treason, Rebecca West has established in convincing detail the general mousiness of the run of the traitors we have encountered in our recent history and the meanness of their attributes as human beings. The same is surely true of spies. It is, consequently, somehow refreshing to be reminded that one of the most successful spies of World War II was no pigeon-chested draper's assistant or disappointed schoolteacher but an aggressively handsome, decorated ex-soldier, an idealist who was regarded by his associates as Bohemian because of his drinking and womanizing, and who was distinguished by a mercurial temperament, sometimes sardonic and sometimes charming.

On November 7, 1944, Richard Sorge, a German, was hanged in Sugamo Prison in Tokyo, having been sentenced to death for the crime of passing Japanese state secrets to an enemy, the Soviet Union. Sorge had lived for ten years in Japan, where he had made a reputation as a capable journalist who contributed political articles to such newspapers as the *Frankfurter Zeitung.* He was a close friend of the German ambassador, Major General Eugen Ott, and edited the embassy's news bulletin. He was a member of the Nazi party and the Nazi press association. He was also an experienced Soviet agent and the head of a small spy apparatus—two Japanese and two other Europeans—whose greatest coup was the intelligence that it was safe for the Russian general staff to move their divisions on the Siberian border westward to reinforce the hard-pressed army that was standing before the gates of Moscow itself. In later years, the Japanese procurator who had conducted the eighteen-week-long pre-trial interrogation of Sorge said of him, *"I-sho ni anna rippa na ningen atta koto nai"*—which the authors quite properly translate as "I have never met anyone as great as he was," though it is worth adding that *rippa* may also mean fine, handsome, magnificent, honorable and noble.

In this entirely admirable book, two dons at St. Antony's College, Oxford, have meticulously reconstructed Sorge's life from his birth in Russia through his career as a journalist and spy to the Sugamo gallows and its aftermath. Mr. Deakin is a historian whose earlier book was *The Brutal Friendship: Mussolini, Hitler, and the Fall of Italian Fascism.* Mr. Storry, who has written a history of modern Japan, taught in a Japanese college before the war.

Richard Sorge was born near Baku in 1895, the son of a German mining engineer and a Russian mother. The Sorges remained in Russia, however, only until Richard was three; thereafter, his life was that of a child in a well-to-do family in a comfortable suburb of Berlin. In August, 1914, he volunteered for the army and was assigned to a student battalion in a field artillery regiment. A month later he was in action in Flanders. During the next year he was transferred to the Eastern Front, where he was twice severely wounded by shrapnel. It is to the experience of this year that the authors attribute his alienation from conventional German society.

> Sorge, like many of his contemporaries, had undergone a mystical re-birth, isolating him in an inner world, divorced from his family and class background, and placing in tormented doubt the postulates of the society in which he was still alive.

In 1924, now married to the former wife of one of his professors, Sorge went to Moscow. He appears to have carried out various European assignments for the Comintern, but in 1929 he was transferred to the Fourth Bureau of the Red Army and departed for Shanghai as a journalist carrying letters of introduction to the German Consulate General. Returning to

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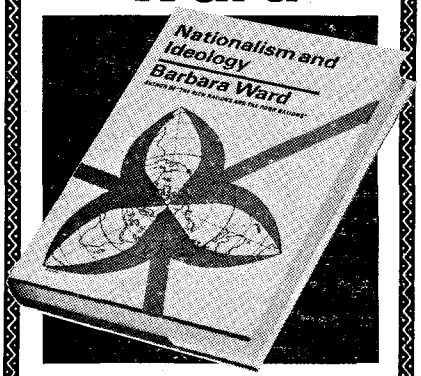

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Moscow after the "Shanghai Incident" of 1932, Sorge was next assigned to Tokyo to attempt to set up an espionage operation there. (En route to Japan, he crossed the United States, where he is believed to have contacted members of the Comintern apparatus, one rendezvous taking place at the Chicago World's Fair.)

In the 1930s, Soviet and Japanese troops faced each other across the Soviet-Manchurian border, and it was Sorge's mission to develop information about the intentions of the Japanese army. His colleagues were a Yugoslav Communist, an Okinawan educated in Los Angeles, a German seaman, and a Tokyo newspaper man. Although the Japanese counterintelligence organization became aware of their activities, the Sorge ring managed to escape arrest until after they had delivered a Japanese order-of-battle as of the summer of 1941 and the information that the army was planning to strike southward rather than north into Siberia.

The Sorge case did not become public until 1949, when the War Department overrode the objections of MacArthur's G-2 to publishing material acquired in Tokyo early in the occupation. In the last act, in January, 1965, Anastas Mikoyan presented the Japanese wife of Sorge's Yugoslav accomplice with the posthumous Order of the Patriotic War, First Class. Sorge himself was declared a Hero of the Soviet Union and, in the spring of last year, his handsome and rather saturnine face was portrayed against a red background on a commemorative four-kopek stamp.

The Case of Richard Sorge is an extraordinarily able piece of work, scholarly and infused throughout with the sense of being the definitive work on the case. Not the least of its virtues is the authors' abilities to render Sorge himself as a substantial, complex, and thoroughly engrossing human being.

Rexroth: Citizen of Bohemia

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NOVEL. *By Kenneth Rexroth. Doubleday & Co. 367 pp. $5.95.*

LEONARD KRIEGEL
Mr. Kriegel is the author of The Long Walk Home *(Appleton-Century Crofts).*

Kenneth Rexroth's autobiography, like those of Granville Hicks and Alfred Kazin, points to the special difficulties this genre offers any writer. Although it is not a true autobiography, Fitzgerald's *The Crack-Up* has always seemed to me a book which the writer of an autobiography should seek to emulate. It has the consciousness of its own truth, and while it takes a good look at the skeleton in the closet, it does so with a minimum of sentimentality and self-consciousness. It was no longer the most handsome skeleton around when he wrote this book, but it was Fitzgerald's own—and *The Crack-Up* remains an example of that kind of honesty which prevented him from becoming "a punch-drunk pug fighting himself in the movies," as he once said of Hemingway. A rare honesty—neither nasty nor sentimental—it is the quality which every writer of an autobiography must strive to acquire.

Perhaps this is not a very good way to begin a review of *An Autobiographical Novel.* Life is difficult enough for a writer without subjecting him to comparison with genius. Nor do I mean that Kenneth Rexroth is dishonest. But *An Autobiographical Novel* is portentous in its very simplicity, and the kind of equilibrium it lays claim to simply does not exist in this world. I am sorry about this, for Kenneth Rexroth is not only a talented poet and translator; he also seems to have survived in pretty good shape a brittle and self-seeking world. But in re-creating his first 21 years, he is "playing simple"—and to play simple is a peculiarly immodest modesty. An assessment of self, after all, demands the consciousness of what one measures that self against. Perhaps this is what makes *The Education of Henry Adams* the best of all American autobiographies. Adams might have been no more than a querulous patrician, but he had to measure himself against all those Adamses who stood, like a row of Roman statues, in a long line behind him. The model for Kenneth Rexroth's "picaresque adventure" is Kenneth Rexroth. Bohemians should not speak into tape recorders; not, at least, until they know who made the choices as limited as they were.

The first two chapters of *An Autobiographical Novel* are devoted to the genealogy of the Rexroth family, both here and in Germany. It is not until Chapter 3 that Rexroth himself appears, born in South Bend, Ind., on December 22, 1905. Prior to the First World War, northern Indiana seems to have been a children's paradise. We can accept Kenneth Rexroth's word for that, since there are stranger things in American history. After all, historians tell us that in 1912 more than 16 per cent of Oklahomans opted for Eugene Debs for President. And so we can accept an Indiana which has been "animated by the spirit of a won revolution." But it is not until Rexroth goes to live in Chicago at the age of 12, following the death of his mother and father, that the world he is writing about takes on greater credibility. It is probably not Mr. Rexroth's fault, but his Midwest seems far less real to me than those "Freudianized Deweyites" he is so intent on needling. Rexroth is as keen on the Midwest as he is down on Freud, and while I am willing to follow Bohemia a long way down the road I am afraid that I cannot follow it that far.

Once he has arrived in Chicago, Rexroth is most intent on his precociousness, and he seems to have set about being precocious in an amazingly analytical fashion. The reader would like to hear more about the Irish Catholics and Jews of Studs Lonigan's Fifty-Fifth and the El. At this point, however, Rexroth insists on the pre-eminence of Rexroth. His "closest friend" is "the Jewish boy who married Studs Lonigan's sister," but all we learn about that boy is that he was "always dressed in the latest thing out of *Vanity Fair*" and that he "was at least as precocious" as Rexroth himself. With that, he disappears from the narrative, as do so many other figures of note. On page 130, for instance, the reader is introduced to a veritable creative *Who's Who,* all of whom Rexroth met as a 15-year-old boy in the salons of Chicago. But they exist as a mere gallery of names, a kind of batting order of the famous. It is one of the problems that Rexroth seems to have had in writing this book. He must mention those he knew, like Clarence Darrow and Sherwood Anderson, but he must also pretend that knowing them was of no special significance. Perhaps it wasn't, but then why drop the names?

It may have been Chicago that fostered Rexroth's tough-guy sentimentality; he is capable of writing; "No virgin saying her rosary in a convent is as innocent as an elderly debauched whore and pickpocket." And he feels compelled to hold the world in judgment and to feed us those judgments in the glibbest of manners: "American fiction, even Hawthorne, even Melville . . . seems to me to be absolute trash"; his idea of the academic world is vintage 1920; his whores, gangsters and drifters all seem descended from the Hollywood of the 1930s; his succession of legacies inherited from unknown relatives at just the right time is terribly contrived (even if they actually happened); his memory is selective in an unselective way; the idyllic bliss of his sexual encounters, along with

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the baiting of Freud and psychoanalysis, is tedious and contrived, the groaning belly sounding off in the hungry head; even his religion and his radicalism, the two most appealing aspects of his life, are essentially self-consicous and idealized.

And yet, after one has said all this, the fact remains that *An Autobiographical Novel* has a strange appeal, the appeal of a world that, even if it never existed, should have existed. Rexroth can be truly moving, especially when he permits the development of his own receptivity to experience, when he stops showing off the hair on his chest and concentrates on the real job of the writer of autobiography—to feed us the experience of a life that, whatever its peculiarities, has been lived with appetite and zeal.

But for too much of this book he is so self-conscious about his emergence as the young artist and Bohemian that he becomes the victim of his life. It was lived, we feel, to be written about later, or at least to be told to the listeners of Pacifica Radio. In his preface, Kenneth Rexroth wrote: ". . . possibly out of the narrative a self can be deduced." For this reviewer, at least, that self remains hidden.

Hinterland II: Cleveland, Pittsburgh and Points South

JULIUS NOVICK

Mr. Novick, a former Fulbright scholar, has directed and acted in England, Italy and the United States. This article, second of a series on the American national theatre, is based on studies made by him on a Ford Foundation grant.

The current generation of regional or "resident professional theatres" has for its ancestors the amateur "little theatres" that sprang up in various parts of the country during and after World War I, full of high hopes and ringing manifestoes, to present the *avant-garde* drama of the day. The hopes and the manifestoes were never justified; with the depression, if not before, it became clear that the Fabulous Invalid would have to find a cure somewhere else. However, a number of little theatres survived, with their ideals somewhat impaired, by turning to conventional Broadway material. Sporadically, new amateur groups came into existence. Many of them hired professionals to run the theatres and direct the plays. And, over the years, a few signed contracts with Actors' Equity and became professional theatres. Some of these theatres are now the senior citizens of the resident theatre movement.

The oldest of all is the Cleveland Play House, now sedately celebrating its fiftieth anniversary. It was founded by a high-minded group of Cleveland amateurs; in its first five years it produced plays by Molière, Goldoni, Beaumarchais, Synge, Claudel, Maeterlinck, Andreyev and a mysterious work called *Snow* by one Przybyszewski.

In 1921, the Play House hired Frederic McConnell as its first professional executive director; by the time he retired thirty-seven years later, the Play House had evolved from a loosely organized amateur *avant-garde* group to a large, stable and prosperous professional theatre that did a little bit of everything, but specialized in recent Broadway hits. When McConnell retired in 1958, he was succeeded by K. Elmo Lowe, whom he had brought with him to the Play House in 1921.

Today Mr. Lowe presides smilingly over the busiest of the resident professional theatres. This season, between September and May, the Play House has mounted seventeen productions in its three theatres, for an audience of some 125,000. Two productions were sent on a twelve-week tour of universities and small towns, where they played to another 100,000 people. Then there was the Shakespeare Festival: *Twelfth Night* this year for 25,000 teenagers. And the Children's Theatre, which played to some 12,000 kids. And the annual summer season at Chautauqua, which attracts another 16,000 or so spectators. The approximate grand total for the year, then, is an audience of 278,000. Clearly, the Cleveland Play House is reaching the public.

The Play House is solid. Its budget this year is around $400,000; it owns some $2 million worth of real property, including a flourishing restaurant that is run as a private club. It is true that over the years its neighborhood has become rundown, but now the area is scheduled for urban renewal, and the Play House will move to a new site downtown. Even the acting company (about twenty-eight Equity actors: one of the largest permanent Equity companies in America) is solid: performers come to Cleveland not just for a play or two, or even for a year or two, but, in many cases, for a decade or two. The Play House is an American success story.

The danger with success in America, however (and perhaps with success in general), is the tendency on the part of the successful to forget, from time to time, what it's all for. "I went into the theatre," says Mr. Lowe, "because of Mr. Stanislavsky and Gordon Craig. . . . I wanted the Moscow Art Theatre." He didn't get it.

I do not say that the Play House management doesn't put on good plays; this season they mounted *Tartuffe, Uncle Vanya, Antigone, Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* and *Twelfth Night*. They have even dared to put on a good number of new plays never done before anywhere: something few American theatres have the courage to attempt very often. Nor do I mind that they make a buck by putting on *Mary, Mary;* the provision of innocent merriment is a historic function of the theatre, and by no means a dishonorable one, if the merriment provided is of good quality. But the Play House often descends to second-rate merriment, and—even worse—to gussied-up hack work that has pretensions to "Art." This season, for instance, it produced Sidney Michaels' *Dylan*, which merchandises the life of Dylan Thomas for people more interested in gossip than poetry; and Ira Wallach's *The Absence of a Cello*, which might have been tolerable trivia had it not been decked out with a maddeningly simple-minded hard sell for Integrity. (Why

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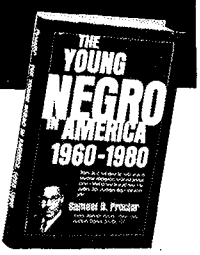

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do popular playwrights never learn that the integrity of trivia is triviality?)

My own visit to Cleveland coincided with the Play House's production of *The Amorous Flea* by Jerry Devine and Bruce Montgomery, a peculiarly vacuous and ugly musical-comedy debasement of Molière's *School for Wives,* which had an off-Broadway run some time ago. It is a coy, twaddling, graceless little show, and Cleveland gave it a performance to match, full of strutting, mincing, simpering, giggling and pouting (with singing that ranged down from tolerable). It was a horrible triumph of pseudo-"style."

But there is a certain amount of Jekyll and Hyde about the Play House. While *The Amorous Flea* held forth in one of its theatres, another was occupied by an excellent production of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* Incredibly enough, both productions were directed by the same man (Kirk Willis, who came to the Play House in 1929).

Mr. Lowe obviously had qualms about the Albee play: ". . . we must caution our audience," he wrote, "that this enormously successful prize-winning play is brittle, brash, and frankly outspoken. . . . We say categorically that it is a play for adults who are shockproof and we urge you to consider this seriously before making plans to attend." A columnist in the Cleveland *Plain Dealer* called it "a sacrilege that this kind of slime should be flowing across the stage of the Play House. . . ." The night I was there, however, the audience seemed to be taking the slime in its stride. They laughed loudly at the funny parts, but they also seemed absorbed in most of the emotional climaxes, and they spent the intermissions talking earnestly about what it all meant. ". . . so she created this myth," said one student type to another, after the show. "And he went along with it. He needed it too; it was all he had," said the other. "I would like to see it again," said a respectable-looking gray-haired matron.

The women in the cast—Jo Ann Finnell as Martha and Catherine Heiser as Honey—were admirable; the men were particularly interesting. Larry Tarrant, who played Nick (the ambitious young biologist), is either a clever good actor or a very lucky bad one. Nearly everything he did was halfhearted, hollow, unspontaneous, hackneyed, fake; yet all these characteristics seemed to belong to the character, not the actor. It was a clear and vivid portrait of a total opportunist, a man who lives every moment for what he can get away with. Better, I kept thinking, to be George or Martha, red in tooth and claw, than to be such a mechanical homunculus—which is surely the point Albee is trying to make.

George was played by William Paterson, a nineteen-year Play House veteran and evidently a superb actor. In appearance and manner he was very much the man of distinction, yet there was defeat and futility in the very set of his shoulders. His irony was relaxed, delicate and sharp; he showed himself a master of understatement for both comic and pathetic effect. His other roles this season were in *Never Too Late, Poor Richard* and *The Absence of a Cello.*

The Play House evidently has great resources of talent as well as real property; it can excel in quality as well as quantity. But it seems that its resources are largely wasted by an effort to please everyone in the choice of material. The audience gives signs of being ready for more rigorous work: Brecht's *Galileo* last year, and Molière's *Tartuffe* this year both did excellent business. But the management appears to be hanging back.

WHY ARE YOU WALKING?

Why are you walking the lane
That leads down to the house
Where a still light is shining?

In the house there is a room
Where a man stares at the wall
All day, and does not move.

A woman stands by the light,
Watching the sick man breathe.
Her hair is the redness of gold.

But that was long ago.
Your father has gone from the house,
The woman is withered and old.

LOUIS SIMPSON

The Pittsburgh Playhouse, just as its namesake in Cleveland, is long established (1934) and wealthy (some $2.5 million in real property). It, too, has three theatres and a private-club restaurant; as well as numerous auxiliary activities (a children's theatre, a touring company that visits high schools as far away as Punxsutawney, Penn., and a theatre school for children and adults). It also began as an amateur group; unlike Cleveland, however, the Pittsburgh Playhouse remained essentially an amateur group until last year. Among its performers, along with a few professional actors, were a truck dispatcher, a barber, a sheet metal worker, a salesman and a minister. Its plays, as general manager Richard Hoover later admitted, were "stock pap"; when it did attempt a classic, business was usually terrible. By comparison, the Cleveland Play House *was* the Moscow Art Theatre.

Gradually, one supposes, word filtered into Pittsburgh that other cities were setting up *professional* theatres, and discovering that there was an audience for plays of some consequence. Last year the Playhouse board fired its artistic director after twenty-eight years of service. The amateurs were cleared out, and the board invited William Ball, a highly admired young director who had worked mostly off-Broadway and at the New York City Opera, to make the Playhouse the first home of his American Conservatory Theatre. The ACT was sponsored by the Playhouse and by Carnegie Tech (a Pittsburgh institution which sent its advanced drama students to intern with the ACT); it was financed with the help of a $115,000 Rockefeller Foundation grant; but it was and is Bill Ball's company.

Ball opened in Pittsburgh on July 15, 1965. In the next six months his group mounted a dozen plays in repertory in two theatres. In one single week it performed *Tiny Alice, The Apollo of Bellac, Antigone* (Anouilh's), *The Servant of Two Masters, King Lear, Tartuffe, Six Charac-*

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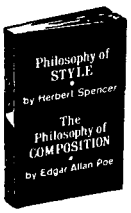

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ters in Search of an Author, The Devil's Disciple and *Death of a Salesman.* Reviews were good. "In Pittsburgh," said the *Post-Gazette,* "the theatre never had it so good. Mr. Ball and his American Conservatory Theatre have restored it to an eminence nobody hereabouts ever hoped for or dreamed of."

Some of the natives were restless. One man wrote to the *Post-Gazette* saying that he and his wife had "been devoted members of the Pittsburgh Playhouse since 1947," but that *Tiny Alice* "is a sick play about mentally sick people by a sick author, Edward Albee. After hearing Mr. Ball's analysis, I am forced to the reluctant conclusion that the sickest of all was Director Ball. . . . Candor forces me to say that I yearn" for the old Playhouse regime—and he was not the only one. But new people replaced the disaffected. "Our audience not only multiplied, they changed," said a Playhouse official. "They became younger and more knowledgeable and eager for the finest things these professionals could do."

Yet at the end of the first six months, the ACT left the Playhouse forever. The reasons for the break are not quite clear. Some say that Mr. Ball was irresponsible and impossible to work with; others suggest that he was too audacious, too odd, too talented even for the stodgy Playhouse management. At any rate, the ACT is now a resident professional theatre without a residence (it has recently played engagements at the University of Michigan and in Westport, Conn., and it has a booking at Stanford University this summer). And the Playhouse will never be the same.

Since ACT left, the Playhouse has slipped part way back into amateurism and "stock pap"—but only part way. To fill his theatre for the winter and spring of this year, Mr. Hoover (still general manager, as before and during the ACT eruption), scheduled a "season of distinguished great plays": *Rhinoceros, Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?, The Complaisant Lover* and *The Knack.* The Playhouse now has a contract with Actors' Equity, but the locals have gotten back into the act: "2 Squirrel-Hillers Star in Rhinoceros," said a headline in the *Squirrel Hill News.*

The Complaisant Lover gave me some idea of what the old regime must have been like. This Graham Greene piece is a glossy, vacuous, French-windows-on-the-garden British comedy, and it was performed in Pittsburgh with a sort of cellophane-packaged urbanity by a cast of six professionals and three local amateurs. The audience was sparse and unenthusiastic; even the young people in it had a settled, middle-aged look. ". . . light, entertaining," I heard someone say. "I don't want anything that makes me think. I think all day."

Virginia Woolf was another matter. It is the kind of play that American actors are good at, and it was played very well in Pittsburgh by a cast of professional New York actors. Of all the plays of the 1960s, moreover, none has so much to say to so many of us in this country as Mr. Albee's demonstration that people who need people aren't necessarily the luckiest people in the world. They flocked to it in Pittsburgh: "Not since last season's *Mary, Mary,*" said Mr. Hoover, "have we enjoyed such a box office deluge." The audience had a tendency toward half-embarrassed giggling at all the sex talk. But they paid attention; they applauded more than politely; and they left the theatre discussing the play.

Mr. Hoover is determined that the Playhouse shall not return to the past. He is currently hunting for an artistic director to establish a new resident professional company at the Playhouse. "I think we have a variety of tastes to satisfy," he says. "We certainly have an intellectual community which wants and should be supplied with the highest form of the art." Nobody was talking that way in the pre-ACT days. Mr. Hoover does not foresee the elimination of escape entertainment, but he envisions it as a minor part of the future program. "We have not been in the vanguard in the development of theatre in America," he admits. "And I think we have some catching up to do."

When the regional theatre movement began to grow, it looked for inspiration not to Cleveland and Pittsburgh, whose playhouses plugged away more or less unnoticed, but to a small group of post-World War II pioneers. Early among these were two ladies from Texas: the late Margo Jones, who started a professional theatre (now defunct) in Dallas in 1947, and Nina Vance, who founded the Alley Theatre in Houston in the same year. The Alley began as an amateur company, performing in a rented dance studio. In 1949 it moved into its present home, a converted fan factory; in 1954 it signed up with Actors' Equity and became a professional theatre. The first few years were a struggle: "I clawed this theatre out of the ground," says Miss Vance. Lately her task has been easier, since the Alley has become a favorite beneficiary of the Ford Foundation.

The fan factory seats only 230; this season it has been operating at very nearly full capacity, and turning many people away. Yet when I asked about it at my downtown hotel, it took two desk clerks and a bell captain in conclave to figure out where it was. Clearly, the Alley needs a new home if it is to play any significant part in the communal life of Houston. And it is going to get one, with the aid of $1 million from the Ford Foundation and an additional $800,000 raised locally. The new building will have two theatres, seating 800 and 300, and will open in late 1967 or early '68. It will be in downtown Houston, where the hotel clerks won't be able to miss it. The Ford Foundation will also supply $110,000 a year for the first ten years, to defray operating expenses in the new building.

Miss Vance says that she started her theatre in unconscious revolt against amateur theatres that devoted themselves to "family plays"; there were other works, she thought, that the American people wanted to see. Nevertheless, for many years she did works like *Time Out for Ginger, The Reluctant Debutante* and *Holiday for Lovers.* But the Houston audience has evidently grown in more ways than one—or perhaps Miss Vance has. She now believes that: "The public is ahead of our ability to keep up with its taste." "I'm less scared to give 'em what I didn't think they'd buy," she says, "than I was even a year ago." This season she has given 'em a responsible, if not very adventurous program: *The Devil's Disciple, Ah, Wilderness!, Right You Are (If You Think You Are), You Can't Take It With You* and *Duel of Angels.*

Duel of Angels, Jean Giraudoux's last

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play, was on the bill when I got to Houston. It is a curious, subtle, difficult work, dramatizing the conflict between Innocence and Experience, Idealism and Expediency, Chastity and Promiscuity. The Alley has actors who can play Giraudoux —who can display elegance and intelligence, who can deal with his irony—but it does not in all cases have actors who can play these particular parts in this particular play. It appears to have, for instance, two actresses who could play Experience (or Paola, as Giraudoux calls her). Unfortunately, one of the two had to play Innocence (Lucille), and was too mature, too sophisticated for the part. Lillian Evans, who *did* play Paola, had a combination of flamboyance and precision that more than compensated for her inability to pronounce the letter "g" at the end of a word. The production in general, cramped on a tiny stage, was neither admirable nor discreditable, but it certainly did not make the most of the play. In her new theatre, presumably, Miss Vance will have a larger, and even better company to cast from.

Like the Alley, the Front Street Theatre in Memphis was founded as an amateur group by a local zealot. George Touliatos began it in a hotel ballroom in the summer of 1957, when he was 27 years old. It "went Equity" in 1959, and moved into its present quarters, a 372-seat converted movie house, in 1961. (The cultural climate has changed in this country: theatres are growing now at a much faster rate than they were in the late forties and early fifties.) Mr. Touliatos hopes within three years to move his company into a new theatre that would form part of a cultural center in Overton Park.

Mr. Touliatos' aim, he says, is to make his audience "better citizens by alerting them . . . to the most dominant ideas in the world today that can be projected, by showing them problems of the past that are problems in life today, so that they can cope with them and handle them better. . . . " He is aware, however, of a certain disparity between his aspirations and his achievements.

"I'm very proud of the audience here," he says. On the other hand, he also says that people in Memphis are "not ready to accept" what he hopes to do. "At this point, there is still the problem of developing audience taste [and of] economic security." And so he has been "somewhat conservative in my selection of plays. I feel a certain guilt about this, I suppose."

In 1964 he told a local newspaper man: "I think the popular play has a definite place in the schedule. We're not trying to be ultra-arty—I can't stand that." But when I saw him this spring, he said: "We don't do *Life with Father* anymore." Instead he

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does two musicals a year; he calls them "the only true American art form," but maintains that he does them in order to survive: "If we took the musicals out of our subscription package I'm afraid we'd lose half our subscribers." (The audience he is so proud of?) Nevertheless, he has hopes for the future: once he had to do nine musicals a season, in a few years he hopes he will not have to do any. Evidently Mr. Touliatos is suffering from an advanced case of ambivalence; but it appears that in Memphis, as in Pittsburgh, Houston and elsewhere, the tide of the times is flowing toward a more serious repertory. Next year, aside from two musicals, Mr. Touliatos will offer Williams, Pirandello, Osborne, Molière, Shaw and Shakespeare.

The Front Street production of Anouilh's *Becket* this spring, directed by William Woodman (who has also worked at the Cleveland Play House and the Hartford Stage Company), was a quite creditable job. In spite of all the talk about ensemble acting that goes on in resident-theatre circles, these theatres are often much better off with plays written around one or two characters, because one or two first-rate actors are easier to find than half a dozen or more. Several roles in *Becket* were quite badly played, but the production was held together by the performances of William Shust (jobbed in from New York) as King Henry and Gil Rogers (a member of the resident company) as Becket.

Both parts were unconventionally cast. Becket, the "little Saxon," was 6 foot 3; he had neither quite the lightness for Becket's dandyism at the beginning nor quite the weight for his archepiscopal dignity at the end. But he had what was really needed: an air of quiet authority and unpretentious intelligence, and a nice relish for irony. The king was not the usual expansive brute, but a little boy who liked to shock his elders and to have his way. The relationship between the two was clear and credible: a case of passionate adolescent hero worship, fatally complicated by the fact that the adolescent in question was the king. About every half hour or so there came a reminder that this was not quite what Anouilh had in mind, but on the whole it worked surprisingly well.

In Oklahoma City, Mack Scism's Mummers Theatre was also founded (in 1949) by local people as an amateur theatre. But the Mummers is still in a very early evolutionary state, far behind almost every other theatre I visited. Though it proclaims itself "Oklahoma's Only Resident Professional Theatre," it is still not really professional. Mr. Scism maintains a few ill-paid, non-Equity resident actors, but otherwise relies on local talent: two students from Northwest Classen High School had prominent roles in the Mummers' production of Noel Coward's *Hay Fever*. One was intolerable; the other provided a slightly monotonous but competent funny-fat-girl characterization that was almost the best performance of the evening.

The Mummers now functions in an old oil field equipment warehouse that seats 286 people, but the Ford Foundation has recently given it $1.25 million to build and equip a new theatre, and to raise the company to Equity status. Lord knows, the Mummers needs the money, but does it deserve it? Many people in the resident theatre movement feel that Ford has given Mr. Scism a very great deal of money as a reward for a not very high level of achievement. One theatre official dismissed the grant as the foundation's attempt "to plant culture on the prairies." Certainly it would seem that if a theatre of decent quality can be established in Oklahoma City, "in the big fat middle of the Bible Belt," as a local resident observed, then it can be done anywhere. What will Mr. Scism buy with his million and a quarter (plus $700,000 raised locally)? As yet, nobody knows.

ART / Max Kozloff

No better exhibition of current art's taste for riddles, its limitless powers of hybridization, or its antiseptic energy can be imagined than that now at the Jewish Museum, entitled, with befitting neutrality, "Primary Structures." Not long ago we were given a foretaste of these pleasures in a show called "Sculpture From All Directions" (World House), followed shortly thereafter by one at Irvine, Calif. And there are at present two supporting events, at Finch College and at the A.M. Sachs Gallery. Taken together, they invoke a sensibility of sculptural dry runs, striving for expression despite, and through, its very fragmentation.

But perhaps these are not the words to describe a phenomenon whose every implication is synaesthetic. That is, it seeks to transfer sensory perceptions characteristic of one medium, worked out in a language of metaphorical equivalence, into those of another. In this case, the three media are architecture, painting and sculpture. Yet, rather than incorporate units identifiably associated with each of these three arts into one additive construct, the typical amalgam here forms a bold blend of their qualities. The space with which they deal, as well as the forms they often display, recall the internal members of buildings. Their polychrome surfaces, in the meantime, are pictorial in the manner that emblem painting, or the shaped canvas has for some time accustomed us. While the contexts in which they are seen are still—although one almost feels reluctantly—sculptural. To the extent that three-dimensional activity today holds these various impulses in tricky suspension, it marks a considerable shift from the monolithic or self-contained, or even "free form" sculpture, so satisfyingly poised, of the recent past. In place of earlier anthropomorphic or "eloquent" compositions, one's eyes are invited to train on stunted, non-tactile objects, disjointed or inert elements, sometimes repeated in puzzling sequences. These elephantine presences activate far less space than they take up. But they also prefer to insinuate a buoyancy through lightness of color and an obvious hollowness of mass that tends to free them from too secure or dead a placement. In conjunc-

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tion with their wall or ceiling orientation, this buoyancy is responsible for a kind of frozen or mousy gaiety. Having extended themselves simultaneously in three separate areas, the current pieces seem to be paying an emotional price in their strange uncertainty of mood.

Part of this problem might stem from their range of new materials. There are as yet no expressive coefficients by which to "read" formica or fiberglass or polyester resin. It could be, of course, that such merely utilitarian synthetics are desired for their very impersonality. Many artists would have us believe so. But if these materials are impersonal (which is always a relative concept), they are never nondescript. Sometimes one feels that the sculptors have overlooked the bathroom or office associations of their substances; at other moments, that they are ironically aware of them—if not of their already period quality quaintness. Often, the impression is of an unwitting illustrationalism, as the relentless power of the spectator to see the real object in the mock-up, and the homely literalness of the latter's material, fuse into varyingly unstable images of banality. Perhaps what I am saying is that the sculptor can never attain a neutral transmission of his thought, and the attempt to do so only entangles him in a vestigial sentimentality, whose effect is psychologically enervating. The effort to "de-sexualize" the surfaces, in this instance, can lead the work to unman itself aesthetically.

At this point, it might be useful to sidetrack two red herrings that have been connected with the show. One is the confluence or deliberate affinity that many of the exhibitors state they have with science; the other is the false issue that a work's industrial manufacture (or physical origin) invalidates it as art. Whenever an artist tells me that he is "with" the latest researches, say, in nuclear physics, and that his work "embodies" their findings, I think not merely that he is misinformed but that his art probably needs the crutch of his newfangled (and tiresome) religion. And whenever I hear that the literal product of craftsmen or machinists cannot be accounted a work of art, the speaker strikes me as unacquainted with our conceptual sophistication about the identities of art. It is only when the craftsman is in abject bondage to the artist that a proper finish—beyond the means of manual or studio tooling—can evoke the intended hyper-polished or dead-pan effect. Paradoxically, the more anonymous the result, the more it emerges as intended and controlled by its author. Irregularities, in this case, far from being ingratiating touches of humanity, constitute distracting blemishes. What is normally called standard machine work is quite different from this custom-made engineering.

The trouble, then, is that many of these works lean debilitatingly toward either affirmation of Platonic idea, or a topicality in the American present. Instead of "primary structures," they become weightless wonders or cloddish artifacts. One sees mute polyhedrons and aggressive jungle gyms, flavorless cubes and trellises or trademarks or three-dimensional road signs, suckered in, as it were, by commercial practices whose mere good taste has escaped ironic displacement. As for the included British sculpture, it introduces a note of giddiness to the proceedings that sometimes slides down to the plexiglass capers of Peter Phillips' "Tricurvular," or up to the menacingly ludicrous sliced cone of Phillip King. Certainly the British rely on a surrealism and animism that livens their efforts, but can also seem a little too pat.

The actual progenitors of the work shown at the Jewish Museum are, as may be imagined, variegated. Present by spiritual proxy are the sculptors David Smith and Mark di Suvero; participating in the (painted steel) flesh is Anthony Caro. Also evident is the influence of painters: Ellsworth Kelly, Kenneth Noland, Charles Hinman, Sven Lukin, Frank Stella and Al Held. From the first group was learned a kind of bulky, but lightfooted gesturing, sometimes profiled, in the manner of a surrogate drawing, always grandiose in scale, and frequently low-swung and off-center in composition. The Cubist or Abstract-Expressionist vocabulary of such work has now been expunged in favor of something stylistically less definite and decisive, if still distinctly edged and shaped. From the second group, the painters, have come impulses that have to do with compression, repetition, and an anti-harmonic color which also avoids any particular spatial function. In other words, the "thingness," the inertness, of certain aspects of recent painting, decelerating all sense of process, is what has most affected the new sculptors.

None of this in itself would have guaranteed any spectacular results, and indeed, it can be seen how mutually contradictory these origins are. Sensitive to their presence, the "primary structure" people have yet found it very difficult to profit from them. Just the same, there are a few absolutely remarkable works of art in the show. It has been said that Ronald Bladen's three leviathan, painted aluminum and wooden, leaning slabs are the most monumental statement in postwar sculpture; and, further, that they are cantilevered hauntingly from their bases to weigh against and yet elate the close-coming spectator. With this, I meekly agree. If for no other reason than its exhibition of this work, the "Primary Structures" show has made history. Similarly, the "Rainbow Picket" of Judy Gerowitz, with its six bars diminishing and slanting in to buttress a nonexistent tension between floor and wall, all of which is contradicted by the suavity of her cosmetic coloring, is an unforgettable piece. The same goes for Larry Bell's coated glass and metal frame boxes, or rather chambers for the distillation of metaphorical incense. With vatic elegance, they, too, "contain" a false presence, and reflect it by means of surfaces which stop just short of being two-way mirrors. Surely the most radical of idioms along such lines, and conceivably the most instructive, is exemplified by Donald Judd and especially Robert Morris. Their aesthetic stock in trade consists here of galvanized iron boxes, sequentially arranged; or off-white, fiberglass, upturned L beams. Proceeding from the notion that "simplicity of shape does not necessarily equate with simplicity of experience" (Morris), their position has been most consistent and uncompromising, without eliciting, in me, at least, the slightest scintilla of emotional reaction. It is not, after all, a great virtue unswervingly to follow a straight line, if it leads out the window. Considerably more engaging, if somewhat unresolved, is the work of Robert Grosvenor, Michael Todd and Isaac Witkin: all men of resourceful talent, and exhilarating high spirits, mingled with a certain cunning. Credit must finally be given to Kinaston McShine, who organized, without doubt, the most enterprising exhibition of the year.

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